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**THESIS**

**THE IMPACT OF CHANGES IN DOMINANT U.S.  
THREAT PERCEPTION ON THE COHESION OF THE  
U.S.-ROK ALLIANCE**

by

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December 2014

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This thesis starts from the question of what the key factors are shaping the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance. To answer this question, the author researches how cohesion has evolved since the end of the Korean War. Since previous research has focused on the Korean drivers, this thesis examines dominant U.S. threat perception to balance ROK sides. The U.S. has had four significant crises: Detente, the second Cold War, global terrorism, and the rise of China. Following the four crises, this research divides the whole period into four sub-periods. To gauge alliance cohesion, the author chooses four indicators: official statements and documents by leaders, combined exercises and operations, the institutionalization of the alliance, and combined military capability.

The results of the analysis suggest that dominant U.S. threat perception determines the strength of alliance cohesion. When the U.S. perception changed, the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance changed in a same direction. The U.S. does not accept ROK's attitudes – strengthening or weakening – toward this alliance passively, but actively reflects its interests in alliance cohesion.

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THE COHESION OF THE U.S.-ROK ALLIANCE**

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

A2/AD	Anti-Access/Area Denial
ABM	Anti-Ballistic Missile
ASWEX	Combined Anti-Submarine Exercise
CFC	Combined Forces Command
CFE	Conventional Armed Forces in Europe
CPX	command post exercise
DOD	Department of Defense
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DSCA	Defense Security Cooperation Agency
DTICC	Defense Technology & Industrial Cooperation Committee
EASI	East Asia Strategic Initiative
EASR	East Asia Strategic Report
F-X	Fighter-eXperimental Project
F/E	Foal Eagle
FMS	Foreign Military Sales
GPR	Global Posture Review
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IMET	International Military Education and Training
START	Strategic Arms Reduction
JCC	Joint Communique Committee
JCS	Joint Chiefs of Staff Republic of Korea
KIDD	Integrated Defense Dialogue
KR/FE	Key Resolve / Foal Eagle
LCC	Logistics Cooperation Committee
MAP	Military Assistance Program
MASF	Military Assistance Service Fund
MLSA	Mutual Logistics Support Agreement
MND	Ministry of Defense
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

OPCON	Operational Control
OSD	Office of the Secretary of Defense
PENORE	Peninsula Operations Readiness Exercise
PRS	Policy Review Sub-committee
RIMPAC	Rim of the Pacific
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
ROC	Required Operational Characteristics
SALT	Strategic Arms Limitation Talks
SCC	Security Cooperation Committee
SCM	Security Consultative Meeting
SDI	Strategic Defense Initiative
SDIO	Strategic Defense Initiative Organization
SHAREM	Anti-Submarine Maritime Search Training
SLOC	Sea Line of Communication
START	Strategic Arms Reduction
STP	Strategic Transition Plan
SUSMOAK	Senior United States Military Officer Assigned to Korea
SWC	Special Warfare Command
UFG	Ulchi Freedom Guardian
UFL	Ulchi Focus Lens
UNC	United Nations Command
USFK	United State Forces in Korea
WHNS	Wartime Host Nation Support
WRSA	Revision of the War Reserve Stocks for Allies

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION**

The U.S.-ROK alliance is regarded by many as quite a strong alliance with a lifespan of more than half a century. However, the strength of this alliance has varied over time, and these two countries have sometimes faced significant conflicts of interest. Many factors influence the cohesion of this alliance. This thesis will address the basic question: what are the key factors shaping the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance? In order to answer this question, thesis research will examine how cohesion in the alliance has evolved since the end of the Korean War.

### **B. IMPORTANCE**

People who study the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance focus on Korean economic or nationalistic drivers. They research how Korean economic development or nationalism has influenced the cohesion of this alliance. Although this alliance is derived from two states' agreement, existing research emphasizes only Korean variables. Within this context, this paper examines the American variables; few people have focused on this area. The U.S. does not accept ROK's attitudes – strengthening or weakening – toward this alliance passively, but actively reflects its interests in alliance cohesion. The U.S. attitude has more influence on the cohesion of this alliance than the ROK. Therefore, it is important to balance the ROK side with a full analysis.

### **C. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES**

The U.S.-ROK alliance has contributed to stability in East Asia. It had deterred coercive expansion of the USSR during the Cold War and has blocked aggressions by the North Korea since the end of the Cold War. However, the U.S. and the ROK have perceived the importance of the alliance differently. While the U.S. has largely regarded the alliance as important within the context of global grand strategy, the ROK has regarded it as the essential alliance in its bilateral relationship, given the threat of the

DPRK.<sup>1</sup> Korean researchers are more interested in the alliance, which results in focusing on only their side. Most of them agree that the ROK determines alliance cohesion. After the end of the Korean War, the ROK relinquished its autonomy to gain security by allying with the U.S. However, the ROK's rapid economic development and emergence of nationalism greatly influenced alliance cohesion of this alliance. By assuming that the U.S. always accepts changes in alliance cohesion that the ROK induces, these studies exclude U.S. variables.

This research addresses the U.S. variable to balance the ROK side considered in previous research. Kent Calder and Min Ye describe the role of crisis as "altering the pre-existing bargaining context and causing changing and breeding stimulus for change."<sup>2</sup> They explain that the crisis includes "a swift change of power distribution within a system, collapse of authority, or wars and other forms of violence."<sup>3</sup> This research assumes that the U.S. has had four significant crises: Détente, the second Cold War, global terrorism, and the rise of China. Based on assumption, this research examines whether the U.S. perception of these four crises is an essential factor shaping alliance cohesion. With regard to the U.S. perception of the USSR, the détente with the USSR in the 1980s, the outbreak of the Second Cold War, and the collapse of the USSR are significant inflections in alliance cohesion. According to the level of the USSR's threat to the U.S., alliance cohesion may have been either weakened or strengthened. September 11 attacks converted the U.S. perception of a crisis to Terrorism. As the U.S. concentrated on the Middle East for military interventions, the alliance in North East Asia became less important. Thus, alliance cohesion in this period may have been quite weak. However, alliance cohesion may be again strengthened because of China's rapid economic growth. Based on strong economic power, China has pursued political status matching its economic status. The rise of China has resulted in territorial disputes with neighboring states. Since the U.S. begins to perceive China's growing power as a crisis,

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<sup>1</sup> Victor Cha, "Realism, Liberalism, and the Durability of the U.S.-South Korean Alliance," *Asian Survey* (1997): 614.

<sup>2</sup> Kent Calder and Min Ye, "Regionalism and Critical Junctures: Explaining the Organization Gap in Northeast Asia," *Journal of East Asian Studies* 4, no. 2 (2004): 198-9

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

the cohesion of the alliance in this period may become stronger. The hypothesis for this research is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. The hypothesis for the thesis

Period	U.S. Crisis	Major event	Expected Cohesion
1970s	USSR (Weak)	Détente with the USSR	Weak
1980s	USSR (strong)	Second Cold War: Soviet War in Afghan	Strong
1990s ~ 2000s	Terrorism	Collapse of the Soviet Union, 9.11 attack	Weak
2010s	China	Political and economic rise of China	Strong

In conclusion, hypothesizing that the U.S. perception of a crisis is a key determinant of alliance cohesion, this thesis will examine the U.S.-ROK alliance.

## D. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1. The U.S.-ROK Alliance

Bueno de Mesquita and David Singer argue that the average lifespan of a defense treaty is one hundred fifteen months, a neutrality agreement is ninety-four months, and an entente is sixty-eight months.<sup>4</sup> Considering that the lifespan of U.S-ROK alliance is more than half a century, strong alliance cohesion between the U.S. and the ROK has proven to be enduring. However, alliance cohesion has not always been strong since the signing in 1953. The history of the U.S-ROK alliance shows that alliance cohesion has fluctuated. While weak in some periods, it became stronger in other periods.

Previous research suggests that several key factors shape alliance cohesion. Victor D. Cha argues that the level of convergence among alliance partners about the security concept determines alliance cohesion. To explain the meaning of security the concept,

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<sup>4</sup> Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and J. David Singer, "Alliances, Capabilities, and War: A Review and Synthesis," *Political Science Annual: An International Review* 4 (1973): 237-80.

Cha suggests a dichotomy of realism and pluralism with contrasting attitudes toward a crisis. Since realism describes international relations as constrained and conflictual, it prefers hard line deterrence by projecting overwhelming military forces. By contrast, pluralism stresses possible cooperation between states. Pluralists contend that negotiation and talks are much better ways to resolve conflicts, debunking the realist approach. If all allies have the same security concept, the degree of convergence is quite high, which results in strong alliance cohesion. On the other hand, if security concepts are defined differently, the degree of convergence is quite low, which produces weak alliance cohesion.<sup>5</sup>

Cha explains the change in U.S.-ROK alliance cohesion by analyzing one significant case. The case is the Agreed Framework (AF) in 1994 toward nuclear development by the North Korea. With regard to the approach toward NK's suspected nuclear weapons development, the U.S. and ROK defined their respective security concepts differently; while the U.S. followed pluralism, the ROK persisted with realism. This divergence was caused by the end of the Cold War: "A gradual shift in the U.S. toward more pluralist conceptions of security has taken place."<sup>6</sup> The U.S. signed the AF with North Korea on October 21, 1994 despite ROK's implicit opposition. The key objective of the AF was to curb the nuclear power plant program not through coercive military intervention but negotiation and talk. However, the ROK had to define its security concept as realism. Although the Cold war ended peacefully, its residue still threatened ROK's security. The NK did not abandon the dream of unification and conducted several provocations against the ROK. In the post-Cold war, the North Korean nuclear threat illustrates the divergence between Washington and Seoul. This divergence caused the U.S-ROK alliance to be weakened. While the ROK security concept is fixed, the U.S. security concept is quite flexible. Therefore, the security definition of the U.S. is the key determinant of alliance cohesion.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Cha, *Realism, Liberalism, and Durability of Alliance*, 609-17.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 615.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 617-22

However, Korean scholars disagree with Cha's argument. Specifically, Hyo-Keun Jee argues that ROK's alliance security culture is the core variable shaping the alliance cohesion.<sup>8</sup> Jee defines alliance cohesion as the level of cooperation among allied states in the security sector. Within constructivism, he asserts that the alliance security culture reevaluates threat recognition and alliance interest, which greatly influence alliance cohesion. He suggests four indicators to measure the change in this alliance cohesion: "military power and the armament of the United States Force Korea (USFK), pledges of the leaders, the degree of alliance institutionalization, and ROK-U.S. combined Drills."<sup>9</sup> As a result, he discovers that in the early 1980s, this alliance cohesion is the strongest because the alliance culture of ROK was "dependent cooperation."<sup>10</sup> In this period, the ROK had to depend on the security umbrella of the U.S. because ROK's military and economic power was too weak to deter DRPK's provocations. The U.S. also needed a strong alliance to contain the expansion of the USSR. On the other hand, this alliance was the weakest in the first decade of the 2000s. The alliance culture of the ROK was changed from dependent cooperation to independent conflict. Based on ROK rapid economic growth known as the miracle of the Han River, the ROK possessed strong economic power, which increased Korea's desire for independent defense. This pursuit of self-defense resulted in weakened alliance cohesion.

While Cha asserts that the U.S. attitude is flexible, Jee argues that the U.S. attitude toward this alliance is fixed, and the U.S. should accept ROK's changed alliance culture in order to maintain strong alliance cohesion.<sup>11</sup> According to Cha, major threats of the U.S. have changed, but the major threat to the ROK remains the same: North Korea. Consequently, in the case of the U.S-ROK alliance, U.S. variables are the key factors shaping the cohesion of the alliance.

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<sup>8</sup> Hyo-keun Jee, "Alliance Security Culture and Alliance Cohesiveness: A Case Study on ROK-US Alliance, 1968-2005" (PhD dissertation, The Graduate School of Yonsei University, 2004): 1-254.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 253.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Cha, *Realism, Liberalism, and Durability of Alliance*, 615; Jee, "Alliance Security Culture and Alliance Cohesiveness," 253.

My research will develop and expand Cha's argument, in order to evaluate its contrasts to ``s argument. Cha does not provide methods to measure alliance cohesion, and his article only deals with a short period. Thus, my research elaborates upon his article and examines the changes in alliance cohesion by providing more detailed evidence. In addition, since the previous research emphasizes Korean drivers, this research balances it by focusing on the U.S. variables.

## **2. Alliance Cohesion**

In previous research, four prominent definitions of alliance cohesion exist. This research does not arbitrarily choose one definition or create a new definition by merging four definitions, but will use them all. Although four definitions differ slightly from each other, they define alliance cohesion similarly. They are all trying to explain more or less the same thing.

Ole R. Holsti defines alliance cohesion as “the ability of alliance partners to agree upon goals, strategy, and tactics, and to coordinate activities directed toward those ends.”<sup>12</sup> Holsti argues that alliance cohesion is the level of allied nations’ agreements. If an alliance partner strongly agrees and supports an ally’s opinions, alliance cohesion is strong, and vice versa. In addition, Holsti pays attention to the relation between alliance cohesion and efficacy. He defines efficacy as “the ability of the alliance to achieve its goals.”<sup>13</sup> According to him, when alliance is based not on agreement but coercion by the stronger allied partner, alliance cohesion is weakened. As a result, the efficacy of the alliance is reduced. Although some debunk the idea that alliance cohesion improves efficacy, most researchers agree that effective alliances have strong cohesion. Since strong alliance cohesion leads allies to reorganize their alliance, allies can eliminate inconsistencies that are a major obstacle to unity.

Freidman, Bladen, and Rosen describe the main characteristic of alliance cohesion as togetherness. They contend that togetherness is explained by sharing a common

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<sup>12</sup> Ole R. Holsti, P. Terrence Hopmann and John D. Sullivan, *Unity and Disintegration in International Alliances* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1985), 16.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

purpose, because a major purpose of the alliance is to achieve common goals. The more fully goals are shared, the greater the alliance cohesion. When a state decides on the level of sharing, expected costs and rewards play key roles. If an ally cannot anticipate more rewards than costs, one has a low degree of alliance cohesion, which results in weakened alliance cohesion. Therefore, what influences unity most strongly in an alliance is the agreement between allies about the sharing of costs and rewards.<sup>14</sup>

Glenn H. Snyder defines alliance cohesion as two significant perspectives: interests and military cooperation. As Snyder emphasizes the role of interests, he argues that alliance partners decide on the level of agreement with an ally depending on their interests. He adds, “Alliances are more highly valued, and are more likely to form, when their members have substantial interests in common.”<sup>15</sup> Alliance cohesion depends on the extent of shared interests. According to Snyder, an alliance needs validation to prevent the alliance from collapsing. One allied state requires its partner to show the reassurance of its interests. Allied states demonstrate the reassurance of their shared interests using three tools: creating and specifying combined military planning; backing up allied partners in case of disputes with non-allied states; announcing official restatements of the alliance. Allied states strongly ask for these validations when they doubt partners’ alliance commitment.<sup>16</sup>

Snyder stresses not only the role of interests, but also military cooperation with regard to alliance cohesion. He argues that alliance cohesion depends on the degree of military cooperation. According to Snyder, dependence is a key factor influencing alliance cohesion. The definition of dependence is quite limited. It does not cover all sectors within the relationship but includes only essential values and needs; it excludes inessential luxuries. Snyder reduces the definition of alliance dependence to military affairs. Considering that alliance dependence greatly influences alliance cohesion, military cooperation plays a significant role in determining the level of dependence and is

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<sup>14</sup> Julian R. Friedman, Christopher Bladen and Steven Rosen, *Alliance in International Politics* (Needham Height, NJ: Allyn and Bacon, 1970), 288-89.

<sup>15</sup> Glenn H. Snyder, *Alliance Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007), 11.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

a key factor in shaping alliance cohesion. Snyder explains elements of military dependence as “a state’s need for military assistance, the degree to which the ally fills that need, and alternative ways of meeting the need.”<sup>17</sup> The key word in military dependence is a state’s need, which is closely related to military cooperation. A state’s need indicates one’s lack of actual and potential resources compared to the resources of the adversary. Consequently, the need for military resources determines the level of alliance cohesion of a state, because the state wants to supplement its shortage of military resources with contributions from its partners.<sup>18</sup>

Researchers, who have written about alliance cohesion, do not analyze the case of the U.S.-ROK alliance. Instead, most of them focus on NATO. Based on four prominent definitions, this research adds the case of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

#### **E. METHODS AND SOURCES**

This research analyzes alliance cohesion by using a Case Study: the U.S.-ROK alliance. Focusing on major crises, this research chronologically evaluates alliance cohesion. The thesis research addresses a prospective timeframe from the 1970s to 2013 chronologically and excludes the early period of the alliance: from 1953 to the 1960s. Considering that the alliance was formed in 1953, alliance cohesion in this period was strong. Thus, the starting point of the analysis is the time that change in the alliance cohesion first took place. According to the U.S. response to four significant crises, this research divides the whole period into four sub-periods: the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, the first decade of the 2000s, and 2010s.

The change in alliance cohesion is gauged not by the absolute level but by the relative level. Compared to preceding period’s the strength of alliance cohesion, this research evaluates its changes as strong or weak. For example, alliance cohesion of the 1980s becomes stronger than the 1970s. In order to evaluate alliance cohesion, this research chooses four indicators: official statements and documents by leaders, combined

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<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 166

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 165-71

exercises and operations, the institutionalization of the alliance, and combined military capability. These four indicators stem from four prominent definitions of alliance cohesion: agreement, sharing costs and rewards, interests, and military cooperation.

The first indicator, official statements and documents by leaders, is derived from agreements and interests. High-ranking officials of allied states have regular meetings to discuss major alliance issues. Reflecting on interests of their own states, they negotiate over extended periods to finally reach an agreement. Thus, official statements and documents by leaders reflect these bargains.

The second indicator is combined exercises and operations that stem from military cooperation. Allies conduct diverse regular combined exercises to improve the effectiveness of military operations. Combined exercises guarantee allies' military support in wartime.

The third indicator, the institutionalization of the alliance, is related to both military cooperation and sharing costs and rewards. Once the institutionalization of the alliance is established, the responsibilities of respective allies for military actions are elaborated. Allies agree with the level of military burden sharing through alliance institutions.

The last indicator is combined military capability, which is closely related to sharing costs and rewards. Allies improve the effectiveness of military actions to upgrade their military armaments in accordance with allied partners' equipment. To develop combined military capability, purchasing similar weapons is advantageous. Making sharing information easier and faster improves interoperability. Therefore, decision makers take combined military actions into consideration when they select the next weapon system.

To identify the strength of alliance cohesion, this research synthesizes literature from several fields: official statements by presidents and high-ranking government officials, two states' agreement in alliance institutions, and relevant scholarly efforts by alliance experts. This research uses agreements and reports by the U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) over which two state defense ministers preside. By

providing evidence related to costs, this research argues that the U.S. perception is the key determinant of alliance cohesion.

#### **F. THESIS OVERVIEW**

This thesis contains six chapters. Chapter I introduces the study's major research question, its importance, the hypothesis, the literature review, and methods. Specifically, the introduction focuses on explaining definitions of alliance cohesion and finding proper indicators for measurement of alliance cohesion. Chapter II-VI will address each period's strength of alliance cohesion. To evaluate alliance cohesion, this research analyzes four indicators based on four definitions of alliance cohesion: official statements and documents by leaders, combined exercises and operations, the institutionalization of the alliance, and combined military capability. They respectively explain the reason for changes in alliance cohesion by showing the U.S. perception of crises: the détente with the USSR, the Second Cold War, the collapse of the USSR and Terrorism, and the rise of China. Finally, by summing up the study's results and the reasons for change in alliance cohesion, Chapter VII suggests policy implications for the U.S. and South Korean governments.

## II. DÉTENTE WITH THE USSR IN THE 1970S

### A. THE U.S. DOMINANT SECURITY OUTLOOK

After World War II, the U.S. and the USSR became the most significant actors influencing all nations. During the 1950s and 1960s, endless conflicts and arms races aggravated the two superpowers' military and political relationships. However, in the 1970s, the two countries' escalated tensions were sharply mitigated. Popularly, it was known as détente. The two nations focused on lessening sharp military confrontations and avoiding potential nuclear war.

#### 1. Major Driving Events

In the 1970s, the U.S. and the USSR agreed to peaceful co-existence, détente; the literal definition of détente is a "relaxation of tension."<sup>19</sup> The term was primarily used to characterize the U.S. and the USSR's shared efforts to develop their relationship in the 1970s.<sup>20</sup> Keith L. Nelson defined détente as an "improvement in Soviet-American relations."<sup>21</sup> The two nations' severe military conflicts were greatly lessened, and their military and political relationships were improved.

The Soviet Union's consistent military buildup led Moscow to possess strong military might. In the late 1960s and the early 1970s, the Soviet Union succeeded in catching up with the U.S.'s military power by modernizing its armed forces and developing nuclear technology. After the Cuban crisis in October 1962, Moscow recognized that the USSR's military was inferior to the U.S. The USSR would have to improve its military strength, especially strategic nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union intended to deploy its ballistic missiles in Cuba, but the U.S. strongly opposed the Soviets' plan and warned a full scale nuclear attacks. Since the Soviet's military power was much weaker than the U.S., to abandon this plan was the wisest for the Soviets'

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<sup>19</sup> Bruce W. Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy: The Dynamics of Choice in the 21st Century* (New York: WW Norton New York, 2007), 160.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Keith L. Nelson, *The Making of Détente: Soviet-American Relations in the Shadow of Vietnam* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1995), xiii.

leader. The USSR deconstructed missile bases and withdrew deployed missiles in Cuba. After that, Moscow concentrated on modernizing its military and developing nuclear warheads. William G. Hyland explained, “Since the Cuban crisis, Moscow had embarked on a sustained buildup of strategic weapons.”<sup>22</sup> Finally, the Soviet Union succeeded in upgrading its military might: “In 1969, the Soviet Union claimed strategic equality with the U.S., and many analysts in Washington thought Moscow aimed at achieving a strategic superiority.”<sup>23</sup> By advancing its military power, the Soviet Union aimed to be ratified by the U.S. as a nuclear and military power and to be legitimately recognized as a leading role in Eastern Europe.<sup>24</sup>

To respond to increased Soviet threats, President Richard Nixon and Henry Kissinger designed the blueprints for détente. President Nixon determined that he would handle the deteriorated relationship with the Soviet Union by talks not by force. He believed that cooperation with the USSR would be a more effective approach than hard-liner deterrence. President Nixon declared a reconciling policy in his inaugural speech, saying “after a period of confrontation, [the U.S.] is entering an era of conciliation.”<sup>25</sup> This speech indicated that U.S. foreign policy toward the Soviet Union significantly shifted from confrontation to negotiation. The U.S.’s aim was to create peaceful relations by reducing the risk of nuclear war with the Soviets. Nixon and Kissinger called this mechanism “a structure of peace.”<sup>26</sup>

To provide a huge incentive for the Soviets to discuss reconciliation, Washington officially admitted the USSR as another military superpower and accepted the military parity between the U.S. and the USSR.<sup>27</sup> The U.S. also made negotiations separated from competition in the Third World to provide incentives for the USSR. This was a first step

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<sup>22</sup> William G. Hyland, *The Cold War is Over* (New York: Time Books/Random House, 1990), 152.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 154.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Deborah Welch Larson, *Anatomy of Mistrust: US-Soviet Relations during the Cold War* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000), 358.

<sup>26</sup> Robert S. McNamara, *Out of the Cold: New Thinking for American Foreign and Defense Policy in the 21st Century*, Vol. 56 (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 70.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

for peaceful co-existence.<sup>28</sup> Moscow positively responded to a Nixon's announcement. Moscow announced that the USSR would become "a peaceful and businesslike [nation]."<sup>29</sup> The overarching goal of the U.S. and the USSR in détente was to restrict arms races. Hyland stressed the importance of controlling arms races.<sup>30</sup> Since the two nations already possessed enough ballistic missiles to annihilate others, further arms races were useless. Thus, they agreed to arms control to reduce competition.<sup>31</sup>

In May 1971, with greatly overlapped objectives, President Nixon officially stated that "the U.S. and the Soviet Union had agreed to concentrate that year on negotiating an ABM agreement."<sup>32</sup> He announced that the two countries would soon reach an agreement on the restriction of offensive arms.<sup>33</sup> The U.S. and the USSR finally reached détente. Radhe Gopal Pradhan argued, "Détente is an inevitable process in superpower relations."<sup>34</sup> He explained that even though one superpower spent billions of dollars to grab the superior position, the opponent should catch up with one to make a balance again.<sup>35</sup> The two superpowers had the incentive for a halt of their arms races.

To avoid misunderstanding about opponents' military behaviors, the two nations established direct communication channels such as the Hotline Agreement in 1963. Both sides signed the Partial Test Ban Treaty in 1963, and participated in the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968. Since these agreements enabled the two nations to predict others' actions and reduced the risks of nuclear wars, they contributed to establishing a constructive relationship between the U.S. and the USSR.

Under the favorable atmosphere in the early 1970s the U.S. and the USSR signed two significant agreements: the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks (SALT) and the Anti-

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<sup>28</sup> Larson, *Anatomy of Mistrust*, 383.

<sup>29</sup> McNamara, *Out of Cold*, 69.

<sup>30</sup> Hyland, *Cold War is Over*, 161.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Radhe Gopal Pradhan, "Détente and World Order," *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 43, no. 1 (January-March, 1982): 95.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

Ballistic Missile (ABM) Treaty. The SALT prohibited Washington and Moscow from developing launchers of offensive missile systems. This led to an agreement with an ABM treaty in May 1972, which prohibited them from upgrading anti-missile defense systems. Two agreements contributed to mitigating nuclear arms races by restricting offensive and defensive arms' developments. McNamara assessed these agreements as paramount achievements during détente.<sup>36</sup> The U.S. and the Soviet Union moved from the unstable nuclear war age to the mutual-cooperation age for peaceful co-existence. To further their bilateral military relationship, they additionally signed several agreements: the Naval agreement in 1972, the basic principles agreement in 1972, the agreement on avoidance of nuclear war in 1973, and the Helsinki Final Act in 1975. In sum, the U.S. and the USSR moved from sharp confrontation called the Cold War toward a new harmonious atmosphere called détente, which greatly influenced U.S. security policy and dominant U.S. threat perception.

## **2. U.S. Perception and Response**

When Nixon was inaugurated as President in 1969, the U.S. faced with several unsolvable international matters. After the Soviet Union achieved military parity with the U.S., it expanded its influences more aggressively with upgraded military power including nuclear weapons. Moscow's advanced nuclear missiles made the Americans worried about a nuclear war and ensuing co-collapse. In addition, the U.S. suffered from economic difficulty to win arms races. To upgrade its weapon system required billions of dollars in order to match the Soviet Union's military strength. To make matters worse, the failure in the Vietnam War and continuing military operations in Vietnam seriously weakened the U.S.'s military and economic strength. In the late 1960s, the American public required the White House to end the war. To deal with the above major problems, reconciliation with the USSR was essential for the U.S.

The Soviet Union achieved military parity, including nuclear technology, led the American public to feel concerned about the collapse caused by the nuclear war. The U.S.'s domestic atmosphere no longer favored arms competition. The American public

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<sup>36</sup> McNamara, *Out of Cold*, 72.

and Congress forced newly inaugurated President Richard M. Nixon to negotiate with the Soviet Union to limit arms races including strategic nuclear arsenals.<sup>37</sup> The Soviet Union's domestic situation was similar to the U.S. The Soviets began to worry about a nuclear war and co-collapse. Peter Wallensteen explained "the common interest was nuclear war avoidance, and most other aspects appeared subordinated to this or became means to achieve [detente]."<sup>38</sup> The U.S.'s ultimate goal was compatible with that of the USSR.

The U.S. suffered from economic difficulty to win arms races. The U.S. and the Soviet Union were short of raw materials to continue their military competitions. Keith L. Nelson discussed how "a scarcity or potential scarcity in both countries of resources was needed to maintain the current structure."<sup>39</sup> The White House had economic and technical reasons to take into consideration reconciliation with the Moscow. It concluded that protections against the Soviets' ballistic missiles were too expensive and even doubted the effectiveness of anti-missile defense systems. Considering that the U.S.'s new military modernization programs required billions of dollars on an ongoing basis, it could not afford the costs of military upgrading.

Above all, the U.S. had a significant objective in détente. The U.S. intended to end the Vietnam War quickly. President Nixon described the Vietnam War as "a subject of deep concern to all American and to many people in all parts of the world."<sup>40</sup> As Bruce W. Jentleson discussed, "The Vietnam War was the most profound setback American foreign policy had suffered since the beginning of the Cold War." As mentioned earlier, due to the failure in the Vietnam War, the U.S.'s political and military leadership was seriously damaged.<sup>41</sup> Many nations began to doubt the credibility of the

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<sup>37</sup> Hyland, *Cold War is Over*, 152.

<sup>38</sup> Peter Wallensteen, "American-Soviet Detente: What Went Wrong?" *Journal of Peace Research* 22, no. 1 (March, 1985), 1.

<sup>39</sup> Nelson, *Making of Détente*, XV.

<sup>40</sup> The U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, "Address to the Nation on the War in Vietnam," [http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/forkids/speechesforkids/silentmajority/silentmajority\\_transcript.pdf](http://www.nixonlibrary.gov/forkids/speechesforkids/silentmajority/silentmajority_transcript.pdf).

<sup>41</sup> Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, 150.

U.S. military power. The expense of Vietnam War caused the U.S. economy to be trapped in recession. *The CRS Report for Congress* estimated the military cost of the Vietnam War: from 1965 to 1975, the U.S. spent \$111 billion, which had the same value to \$686 billion in 2008.<sup>42</sup> Moreover, the American public did not support continuing the Vietnam War, because the number of casualties exceeded two hundred thousand. The anti-Vietnam War movement was strong in the U.S., and Americans urged the government to change U.S. foreign policy toward Vietnam and end the Vietnam War quickly. For the U.S. military's withdrawal from Vietnam, the U.S. needed to obtain the USSR's support or at least passive acceptance.<sup>43</sup> Raymond Garthoff argued that "the dominant foreign policy preoccupation of Nixon and Kissinger ... was finding an honorable exit from Vietnam."<sup>44</sup> Kissinger believed that to settle the Vietnam War rapidly, the improvement of the U.S. political and military relationship with the USSR was an essential precondition.<sup>45</sup> To obtain the Soviets' favorable responses, the Nixon administration more actively pursued the achievement of détente. Thus, it was inevitable for the U.S. to reconcile with the USSR. Washington welcomed reconciliation with Moscow. Since Soviet threats greatly reduced, the U.S. concentrated on dealing with above three major problems: the fear of co-collapse, economic burden, and the Vietnam War.

The changed U.S. threat perception of the Soviet Union influenced the military relationship between the U.S. and the ROK. South Korea was an ideal military base for the U.S. during the early Cold War era. Scholars acknowledged the geographical value of the Korean Peninsula. Richard T. Detrio posited that the Peninsula "[is] a distinct asset to the U.S. in terms of an ability to monitor Soviet activities in the East Asia and the Pacific

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<sup>42</sup> Stephen Daggett, *Costs of Major U.S. Wars* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2008), 2, <http://oai.dtic.mil/oai/oai?verb=getRecord&metadataPrefix=html&identifier=ADA524288>.

<sup>43</sup> McNamara, *Out of Cold*, 70.

<sup>44</sup> Raymond L. Garthoff, *Detente and Confrontation: American-Soviet Relations From Nixon to Reagan* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 1994), 67-70.

<sup>45</sup> Henry A. Kissinger, *White House Years* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1979), 266.

Ocean.”<sup>46</sup> The U.S. armed forces in South Korea could easily access the East China Sea and the Yellow Sea to check the Soviets’ expansion. However, détente led the U.S. to perceive the Soviet Union as a weaker threat. Under diminished Soviet threats, the benefits that South Korea provided were not essential for the U.S. Washington still needed to maintain the U.S.-ROK alliance, but reinforcing the alliance became less important.

## **B. THE COHESION OF THE ALLIANCE**

After the achievement of détente, Washington perceived Moscow as a weak threat. The changes in dominant U.S. threat perception caused the geographical value of the Korean Peninsula to decrease. However, the U.S. did not outright eliminate the alliance, because the Soviet Union did not fully collapse. The four indicators demonstrated that the shift in dominant U.S. threat perception influenced the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

### **1. Official Statements and Documents by Leaders**

In his Guam speech of July 1969, President Nixon declared “the policy of Vietnamization.” This policy required South Vietnam to increase its responsibility for military operations in the Vietnam War and the U.S. DOD to reduce the involvement of the U.S.<sup>47</sup> The speech developed into “the Nixon doctrine,” which brought significant changes in the relationships between the U.S. and its Asian allied countries. The Nixon doctrine’s ultimate aim was to decrease the U.S. military and economic burden by handing over the U.S. responsibility for East Asian allies’ security to them. The U.S. would continue to support its allies to protect their security, but the countries themselves should be primarily responsible for their national defense.<sup>48</sup> Following this doctrine, the government started to reduce its responsibility for Asian allies’ security. The doctrine also stressed, “We shall provide a shield if a nuclear power threatens the freedom of a

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<sup>46</sup> Richard T. Detrio, “Strategic Partners: South Korea and the United States,” *National Defense University* (1989): 89.

<sup>47</sup> Frank N. Trager, “The Nixon Doctrine and Asian Policy,” *Southeast Asian Perspectives*, no. 6 (June 1972): 1.

<sup>48</sup> Nam, America’s Commitment to South Korea, 64.

nation allied with us or of a nation whose survival we consider vital to our security.”<sup>49</sup> By redefining the U.S. armed forces’ role as supporting, President Nixon intended to avoid the U.S.’s automatic military interventions in Asian allies’ conflicts. He would evade another Vietnam War that would seriously undermine the U.S.’s economic and military power. He also aimed to balance the U.S. budget deficit by reducing the U.S. involvement.<sup>50</sup>

Following the Nixon doctrine, Washington withdrew 20,000 U.S. troops from South Korea in 1971. Since the U.S. commitment was reduced, South Korea’s security became at risk. North Korea, South Korea’s major enemy, did not cease its provocations. It planted detonation of explosive on roof of entrance to National Cemetery in 1970 and attempted to President Park Chung-hee in Seoul’s National Theater in 1974; instead of Park, first lady Yuk Yeong-su killed.<sup>51</sup> In the 1970s, South Korea found three North Korea’s infiltration tunnels under DMZ in Gyeonggi-do. ROK President Park Jung-hee had opposed U.S. troops’ reduction. Since U.S reductions in advance of the ROK modernization caused a military imbalance in the Korean Peninsula, North Korea could execute serious provocations.<sup>52</sup> President Park officially announced, “The U.S. reduction should be small, and any military realignment should be accompanied by a sharp rise in U.S. military assistance to the ROK.”<sup>53</sup> Despite Seoul’s strong demands, President Nixon and Kissinger did not change their original plan, and the U.S. military withdrew as planned.

U.S. President Jimmy Carter greatly weakened the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance by stressing the importance of human rights in South Korea. Since the Soviet Union’s security threat was diminished, President Carter could pay attention to non-

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<sup>49</sup> U.S. National Archives and Records Administration, “Address to Nation on War in Vietnam.”

<sup>50</sup> Earl C. Ravenal, “The Nixon Doctrine and our Asian Commitments,” *Foreign Affairs* 49, no. 2 (Jan., 1971): 201.

<sup>51</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 2012), 313

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 231.

<sup>53</sup> Melissa Jane Taylor, *Foreign Relations of the United States, 1977-1980*, Vol. VI (Washington DC: Department of state, 2013), IV.

security agenda. President Park worried that Carter's inauguration in early 1977 would be a big obstacle in the relationship between the U.S. and ROK. Since he was a presidential candidate, President Carter had continually urged South Korea to improve its human rights. However, denying Carter's demands on human rights, President Park consolidated his authoritarian regime. Park suspended the establishment of the Constitution and strengthened the martial law. By establishing "a new revitalized (*yushin*) constitution," he succeeded in obtaining centralized political power, prolonging his presidential term, and restricting civil movements.<sup>54</sup> Regarding Seoul's uncooperative responses, President Carter planned a phased withdrawal of the USFK and the pullout of nuclear weapons from South Korea. With reduced Soviet threat, he did not need to exclusively emphasize security issues. The Carter administration announced that the USFK's withdrawal would be completed within four to five years. According to this plan, 6,000 troops would withdraw during Phase I (1978–1979), 9,000 soldiers during Phase II (– June 1980), and two Brigades and Division headquarters during Phase III. Although the plan was cancelled in 1979, 3,400 troops had been withdrawn in 1978.<sup>55</sup>

To respond to the U.S. withdrawal, ROK President Park declared the policy of *cha'ju* (self-reliance).<sup>56</sup> The ROK initiated the first phase of the Force Improvement Plan (Yulgok Project) to modernize its military on February 25, 1974.<sup>57</sup> Its major aim was to improve military equipment and develop defense industries. However, Seoul was short of military technology and military budget to achieve *cha'ju*. The consistent pursuit of the policy would aggravate its military relationship with the U.S., which would be a grave peril in South Korea's security; "if [the ROK] had [its] way, the U.S. would bring in an additional two divisions."<sup>58</sup> Seoul decided to abolish its plan and solicit the U.S.'s military support to protect itself from Pyeongyang.

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<sup>54</sup> Astri Suhrke and Charles E. Morrison, "Carter and Korea: The Difficulties of Disengagement," *The World Today* 33, no. 10 (October 1977), 366.

<sup>55</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper*, 335.

<sup>56</sup> Suhrke, "Carter and Korea," 368.

<sup>57</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2008 Defense White Paper* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 2008), 312.

<sup>58</sup> Suhrke, "Carter and Korea," 368.

Reflecting on the unfavorable relationship between Washington and Seoul, the number of summit meetings was decreased. In the 1960s, the U.S. and ROK presidents held seven summit meetings in Washington and Seoul; ROK President Park Chung-hee officially visited the U.S. to meet President Johnson and Nixon in 1965, 1968, and 1969. However, in the 1970s, only two summit meetings were held only in Seoul. The U.S. president did not invite the ROK president to Washington. The reduction of summit meetings' number and Seoul's unilateral invitation to U.S. presidents indicated that the U.S. was less interested in South Korea.<sup>59</sup>

In sum, South Korea intended to maintain strong alliance cohesion due to North Korean war provocations. On the other hand, the U.S.'s changed grand strategy, such as the Nixon doctrine, did not require the strong alliance because of détente with the Soviet Union. However, since Soviet threats had not fully disappeared, the U.S. needed to maintain the alliance to prepare for contingencies. Therefore, alliance cohesion became weak, specifically with respect to official statements and documents by leaders.

## **2. Combined Exercises and Operations**

With respect to the second indicator, combined exercises and operations, alliance cohesion became strong. Many combined exercises were newly initiated, and operation plans were sophisticated. These exercises contributed to improving the U.S. and ROK's defense interoperability. Since the Soviet Union did not collapse, the U.S. did not eliminate the U.S.-ROK alliance, but maintained it. To supplement the withdrawal of the USFK, the U.S. had to establish diverse combined exercises. These exercises contributed to improving warfare fighting capabilities and showing combined armed forces' strength.

The Ulchi Focus Lens Exercise (UFL) was a command post exercise (CPX), which trained combined forces' commanders and their subordinate staff. Since being established in 1976, the UFL was performed annually. Its main purposes were not only "to improve not only the conduct of war and specific warfare capabilities," but also "to

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<sup>59</sup> Kwang Sub Kwak, "The US-ROK Alliance, 1953-2004: Alliance Institutionalization [ie Institutionalization]" (PhD dissertation, Graduate School Southern Illinois University, 2006): 131.

ensure a mastery of the procedures for specific warfare fighting capabilities.”<sup>60</sup> The UFL transformed into the most comprehensive combined exercise by integrating two exercises; the Focus Lens Exercise supervised by the United Nations Command, and the Ulchi Exercise that the ROK military controlled. Not only combined armed forces, but also the ROK government participated in the exercise.<sup>61</sup>

The Team Spirit exercise was an annual major field training exercise that was initiated in 1976. Its key purpose was to protect South Korea from North Korea’s provocations. Unlike the UFL, only combined armed forces participated in the Team Spirit exercise. Augmented U.S. armed forces from other Pacific bases and its mainland also participated in the exercise. Team Spirit contributed to solidifying the U.S.-ROK alliance and to developing combined operations to defend the South from the North.

The Foal Eagle (F/E) exercise was an annual combined field maneuver. Its major purpose was to deter North Korea’s war provocations by showing combined armed forces’ power.<sup>62</sup> It was intended to improve combined and joint operational postures. The key military agencies, such as Combined Forces Command (CFC), the Joint Chiefs of Staff Republic of Korea (JCS), the Special Warfare Command (SWC), and Operations Commands, joined in the F/E. In early days, one ROK army Battalion and one U.S. Company participated in the exercise. In 1974 and 1975, South Korea found North Korea’s two infiltration tunnels, which demonstrated Pyeongyang’s intentions for attack again. To respond to escalated tensions, the two nations agreed to broaden the scale of the exercise in 1976. The F/E transformed into a grand scale field maneuver exercise including combined Special Forces.<sup>63</sup>

The Focus-Letina and the Freedom Vault were initiated in 1971. Following the Nixon doctrine, the role of the USFK was gradually changed from leading to supporting, and many U.S. troops withdrew from South Korea. However, to maintain the U.S.-ROK

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<sup>60</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2010 Defense White Paper* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 2010), 70.

<sup>61</sup> Ibid.

<sup>62</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2000 Defense White Paper* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 2000), 204.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid.

alliance and prepare for unexpected contingencies such as North Korea's invasion, the U.S. needed to make plans to rapidly project its augmented armed forces to South Korea. Reflecting this necessity, the U.S. started the above airlift mobility exercises. These exercises' aims were to gain proficiency in transporting the U.S. armed forces from the mainland to the Korean peninsula.<sup>64</sup> These exercises demonstrated the U.S.'s readjusted military strategy; the allies should be responsible for their security, and the U.S. supported them.

### **3. The Institutionalization of the Alliance**

The third indicator, the institutionalization of the alliance, was enhanced, and resulted in strong alliance cohesion. The U.S. and the ROK established the "U.S.-ROK Defense Officials' Talk between the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the ROK Defense Minister;" the meeting was renamed the Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) in 1971. Since the two countries dealt with security issues related to South Korea in the SCM, the meeting facilitated their cooperation in security agendas. Moreover, the U.S. and the ROK agreed to activate the U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command (CFC) to supplement weakened combat powers caused by the USFK's reduction. Since the commander of the CFC controlled and supervised both armed forces, the two nations' armed forces would act in the same direction, which would ensure the high efficiency of combined military operations. Although the USFK possessed fewer military troops and equipment than in the past, a united commanding structure could maximize combat powers.

The U.S. and ROK created an official communication channel, which contributed to improving the two nations' security relationship. In January 1968, North Korea executed two provocations, the Blue House Raid and the capture of the USS Pueblo, which heightened tensions on the Korean peninsula. To respond to these provocations, U.S. President Lyndon B. Johnson and ROK President Park Chung-hee agreed to hold an annual defense cabinet meeting in 1968, which "marked a significant turning point for the security of the ROK."<sup>65</sup> The meeting was intended to consult security issues, including

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<sup>64</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper*, 335.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 334.

North Korea. The first meeting was held in Washington in May 1968, and both sides took turns hosting a meeting each year.

At the 4th meeting in 1971, the title of the meeting was changed from the U.S.-ROK Defense Officials' Talk to the "U.S.-ROK Security Consultative Meeting (SCM)."<sup>66</sup> The change of the title meant that this meeting had evolved into a comprehensive security meeting. The SCM became a highest-level security consultative body, where the two countries' security officials discussed security issues and exchanged their opinions. The development of the meeting reflected the two nations' shared needs for a more advanced official communication channel. The SCM performed the core functions of a substantive policy consultative body. The SCM consisted of two sessions. One was the plenary meeting that co-chaired over the U.S. Secretary and the ROK Minister. The other was five working-level committees that included the Policy Review Sub-committee (PRS), the Security Cooperation Committee (SCC), the Logistics Cooperation Committee (LCC), the Defense Technology & Industrial Cooperation Committee (DTICC), and the Joint Communiqué Committee (JCC). To consult detailed directions at the working level, the committees held a series of meetings before the plenary meeting.<sup>67</sup> The meeting's establishment and evolution solidified the security cooperation between Washington and Seoul.

The activation of the CFC contributed to improving the combined defense posture. President Jimmy Carter announced a phased plan for the withdrawal of the USFK in 1977. In order to supplement the withdrawal, the two nations' DODs signed an agreement to create the CFC at the 10<sup>th</sup> SCM in 1977. The creation of the CFC was an effective way to "deal with the U.S. unit reduction and promote U.S.-ROK military interoperability."<sup>68</sup> Following this agreement, the CFC was established on November 7, 1978. The CFC played a key role in deterring recurrence of hostilities on the Korean peninsula and guaranteeing effective combined operations. In compliance with the Strategic Directive No. 1 that stipulated the assigned missions of the CFC, the

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<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 335.

<sup>67</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2010 Defense White Paper*, 91-2.

<sup>68</sup> Kwak, "Alliance Institutionalization," 161.

commander of the CFC, a four-star U.S. general, could command and supervise both armed forces that contained more than 600,000 active duties.<sup>69</sup> The CFC also had operational control over augmented military forces; “some 3.5 million ROK reservists as well as additional U.S. forces deployed from outside the ROK in wartime.”<sup>70</sup> The CFC became a symbol of strong integration of both sides, because a transnational commanding structure was achieved.

In summary, the establishment of the SCM and the CFC reflected the mutual commitment of the U.S. and ROK to maintain peace and security on the Korean peninsula. The two institutions contributed to stabilizing the two Koreas’ conflicts by deterring North Korea. These institutions supplemented the USFK’s reduction. Therefore, the third indicator showed strong alliance cohesion.

#### **4. Combined Military Capability**

With regard to the fourth indicator, alliance cohesion became weak. Since South Korea’s economy was not developed in the 1970s, the ROK definitely had to depend on U.S. military support. Moreover, considering that South Korea’s armed forces were ill-trained and poorly equipped, Washington’s military aid was essential for Seoul’s security. Responding to the ROK’s economic difficulty, the U.S. planned to offer a great deal of support in the type of grant: the Military Assistance Program (MAP), the Military Assistance Service Fund (MASF), and the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program.<sup>71</sup> The USFK agreed to receive small piece of lands and a few facilities for its station from the ROK government. However, the total amount of the U.S. DOD’s financial support to the ROK military was much lower than the original plan. With reduced U.S. military support, the ROK faced severe problems in pushing ahead its military modernization projects.

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<sup>69</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper*, 335.

<sup>70</sup> The United States Forces Korea, “Mission of the ROK/US Combined Forces Command,” <http://www.usfk.mil/usfk/content.combined.forces.command>.

<sup>71</sup> Kwak, “Alliance Institutionalization,” 150.

The U.S. government announced diverse economic assistance programs for the ROK; “\$93 million in PL 480 Title I loans, \$20 million in Development Loans, \$10 million in Supporting Assistance, and \$5 million in Technical Assistance.”<sup>72</sup> The U.S. DOD also planned the MAP for the ROK for a five-year period. Its total cost reached about \$210 million: \$20 million in 1972, \$40 million in 1973, and \$50 million from 1974 to 1976.<sup>73</sup> In order to balance North Korea’s military power and prepare for the Soviets’ aggression, upgrading South Korean defense capabilities was significant for the U.S. With the U.S.’s financial support, the ROK launched a five-year modernization plan. The plan’s major purpose was to improve ground forces and air defense capabilities; Seoul modernized Artillery and imported HAWK surface-to-air missiles from the U.S. The South Korean government estimated the plan’s budget as \$5 billion and would receive \$1.5 billion from the U.S. through military assistance programs.

However, Washington did not provide all planned financial support; “The U.S. has fulfilled only 69% (\$1,034 million) of its aid commitment in the 1971–75 periods.”<sup>74</sup> Since the U.S. economy suffered from a great deal of the Vietnam War expense and serious inflation, the U.S. could not afford to provide large scale military aid toward South Korea. In reality, the U.S. constantly decreased the total of the MAP: “From about \$297 million in FY 1973, to \$60 million in FY 1976, to \$7 million in FY 1977, and to nothing in FY 1978.”<sup>75</sup> After 1978, South Korea had to finance the necessary budget for its military modernization by itself.

In short, the U.S. provided a large amount of military aid to South Korea, which became a basis of the ROK military’s modernization. However, the U.S. military aid was not fully executed as previous arranged. Washington worried that the modernization of the ROK military would stimulate North Korea to develop its military, which would

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<sup>72</sup> Daniel J. Lawler and Edward C. Keefer, *FOREIGN RELATIONS OF THE UNITED STATES* (Washington, DC: United States Government Printing Office, 2010), 122, <http://static.history.state.gov/frus/frus1969-76v19p1/pdf/frus1969-76v19p1.pdf>.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 232.

<sup>74</sup> Chang-yoon Choi, “Korea: Security and Strategic Issues,” *Asian Survey* (1980), 1136.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

cause instability in Korea. Reduced military supports caused weak alliance cohesion with respect to combined military capabilities.

### **C. CONCLUSION**

In the early 1970s, the U.S. and the USSR shared perspectives on peaceful co-existence, which resulted in détente. The Soviets' military buildup, economic difficulties of the U.S. and the USSR, and public opinion forced Moscow and Washington to reconcile with each other. Since the 1950s, the Soviet Union had focused on developing its nuclear capabilities. As a result, in the late 1960s, the Soviets caught up with the U.S.'s nuclear technology. Since the two countries possessed formidable nuclear missiles, they worried that nuclear attacks would result in co-collapse. Since the two nations suffered economic recessions, they could not spend billions of dollars on arms races. To make matters worse the U.S. was until 1975 trapped in the Vietnam War, which was a serious economic, political, and military burden for the U.S. government. Thus, the U.S. welcomed reconciliation with the USSR. Signing several significant agreements including the SALT and the ABM Treaty, the two superpowers achieved détente.

Under the favorable atmosphere with the USSR, President Nixon declared the Nixon doctrine, which focused on non-intervention in Asia's disputes. Since the USSR's threat was greatly decreased, the U.S. no longer needed strong allies. Specifically, its security relationship with South Korea was deteriorated. The U.S.'s aim was to avoid an excessive responsibility for the ROK's security, which concluded in weak alliance cohesion.

The four indicators, taken overall, demonstrated that the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance became relatively weaker than during the early period of the alliance. Considering that the alliance was formed in 1953, alliance cohesion in this period was the strongest. Although two indicators were stronger, the overall evaluation was weaker. With respect to the first indicator, official statements and documents by leaders, ROK President Park Chung-hee continually emphasized the strong alliance. However, Presidents Nixon and Carter showed low interests in strengthening the alliance. As President Nixon declared the Nixon doctrine, he stressed that allies should be primarily

responsible for their defense. Following the doctrine, President Nixon and his advisor Kissinger designed the withdrawal plan of the USFK 7th division from South Korea. President Carter also executed the reduction of the USFK by condemning the ROK's inadequate human rights policy. The Nixon doctrine and Carter's human rights policy weakened alliance cohesion.

The second and third indicators, combined exercises and operations and the institutionalization of alliance, were strengthened. As a result, these aspects of alliance cohesion became strong. Establishments of the UFL exercise and the Team Spirit exercise improved interoperability between the U.S. and ROK militaries. As more units participated in the F/E, the exercise's ranges and components were expanded. The two nations made great strides in institutionalization of the alliance. They activated the CFC for a firm combined defense posture and established a regular security meeting (SCM) between the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the ROK Minister to deal with issues related to the Korean Peninsula.

The last indicator, combined military capability, also showed the U.S.'s lukewarm commitment to the alliance. The U.S. planned large scale military aid programs. However, the U.S did not fully execute them, because it worried about the Korean Peninsula's instability and its economic recession. The amount of military support was annually reduced from 1970. Since South Korea could not afford to upgrade combined military capabilities, the capabilities were not improved.

Although the development of combined exercises and establishments of alliance institutions demonstrated strong alliance cohesion, overall alliance cohesion in the 1970s became relatively weaker than during the early period of the alliance. The aim of the U.S. to strengthen two indicators was to supplement to the USFK's withdrawal, not to reinforce the alliance.<sup>76</sup> Since the Soviets' threats to the U.S. had not fully disappeared but decreased, the U.S. needed to at the least maintain the alliance. Therefore, the main driver, which led to relatively weak alliance cohesion, was change in dominant U.S. threat perception, detente.

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<sup>76</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2008 Defense White Paper*, 308.

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### III. THE SECOND COLD WAR IN THE 1980S

#### A. THE U.S. DOMINANT SECURITY OUTLOOK

During détente, the U.S. and the Soviet Union preferred negotiations and talks to hard line deterrence. However, as the Soviets invaded Afghanistan in 1979, the U.S.-Soviet relationship was seriously aggravated.<sup>77</sup> President Carter strongly denounced the Soviets' invasion and changed the U.S. foreign policy to containment. The Reagan Administration took a strict and tough stance to the USSR, which meant the end of détente. In the era of détente, the two countries' confrontation was not ended but suspended.

##### 1. Major Driving Events

Although détente between Washington and Moscow was regarded as one of the greatest achievements in the political sector, it was fragile. John Lewis Gaddis mentioned that détente was established not to end U.S.-Soviet competitions but to stabilize them. Wallensteen agreed with Gaddis, mentioning that "Détente was the relaxation of tension, not the elimination of conflict, hence the choice of the term détente."<sup>78</sup> Since the two nations still had many unresolved conflicts, the stability and peace between them could be maintained temporarily. Finally, détente ended due to the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979; this event was cited as marking the end of détente between the two superpowers.<sup>79</sup>

The Soviet Union agreed to détente with the U.S. to take advantage of its benefits not to end conflicts with the U.S. Moscow continued geopolitical competitions and supported communist regimes in the world. Even though the USSR forced North Vietnam, its ally in the Vietnam War, to agree the Paris peace treaty in 1973, it covertly backed up the North's military. As a result, in 1975, North Vietnam took over South

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<sup>77</sup> Stuart D. Goldman and Library of Congress. Congressional Research Service. *U.S. Policy Toward the Soviet Union in the 1980s* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 1982): 1.

<sup>78</sup> Wallensteen, *American-Soviet Détente*, 3.

<sup>79</sup> Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, 167.

Vietnam. After winning the Vietnam War, the Soviets more actively aided communist movements in Africa. Specifically, Moscow provided a lot of military equipment for Marxist coups and guerrilla wars in Angola and Ethiopia.<sup>80</sup> The USSR led to the imposition of martial law in Poland by the pro-Soviet regime, supported terrorism, and posed military threats against western countries.<sup>81</sup>

In the end, the USSR's effort to expand its influence culminated in the invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979; "the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan indicated Soviet adventurism and expansionism, exploiting opportunities to its own advantage."<sup>82</sup> On 27 December 1979, the USSR's armed forces entered Afghanistan and occupied Afghan capital, Kabul. The Soviet military seized key political and military commanding institutions such as the headquarters of the Ministries of Defense, and central committee. By purging opponents including Hafizullah Amin, sometimes called the Josip Tito of Afghanistan, the Soviets succeeded in establishing the pro-Soviet regime in Afghanistan.<sup>83</sup> McNamara argued, "The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan was motivated by the Soviets' own evaluation of their security requirements."<sup>84</sup> The Soviet Union decided to invade Afghanistan to block the establishment of an anti-Soviet regime and the spread of anti-communism.

After the invasion, Moscow stressed the importance of military interventions rather than negotiations. Following redefined military strategy, the Soviet Union relocated the majority of its troops, weapons, and military equipment to project its military rapidly. Above all, SS-20s missiles were redeployed in Europe; they were intermediate-range ballistic missiles with nuclear warheads. This redeployment further aggravated the relationship between western countries and the Soviet Union.<sup>85</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 168-9.

<sup>81</sup> Goldman, *U.S. Policy Toward Soviet Union*, 2.

<sup>82</sup> Wallensteen, *American-Soviet Détente*, 2.

<sup>83</sup> Garthoff. *Detente and Confrontation*, 1015-22.

<sup>84</sup> McNamara, *Out of Cold*, 82.

<sup>85</sup> Wallensteen, *American-Soviet Détente*, 1.

Consequently, the Soviets' invasion of Afghanistan caused the demise of détente, and the two superpowers were faced with serious mutual confrontations again.

## **2. U.S. Perception and Response**

U.S. foreign policy toward the USSR was greatly changed by the Soviets' military actions. Specifically, the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in December 1979 led the U.S. to confirm the demise of détente. Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan emphasized deterrence by announcing their own doctrines. President Carter imposed many political and economic sanctions against the USSR, and most of them were continued by President Reagan.<sup>86</sup> The sharp confrontation against the USSR was a keynote of the Reagan Administration's foreign policy.

As the Soviets executed military interventions in Ethiopia, South Yemen and Afghanistan, President Carter strongly denounced Moscow. By regarding these behaviors as serious threats to the U.S.'s stability, he warned the USSR that "unless [the Soviet Union] withdrew, this inevitably jeopardized the course of United States-Soviet relations throughout the world."<sup>87</sup> Carter announced U.S. foreign policy's shift to the hard line.<sup>88</sup> The Carter administration asked Congress to delay ratification of the SALT II Treaty and prohibited sales of grain and military technology to the Soviet Union. It also increased cooperation with the Soviets' enemies. Washington strengthened its relationship with Beijing and provided Pakistan with military aids.

The primary concern of the U.S. government was that the Soviets intended to seek hegemony in the oil-rich Persian Gulf region beyond Afghanistan.<sup>89</sup> In January 1980, President Carter declared "the Carter Doctrine" to contain the Soviet Union. He announced, "An attempt by any outside force to gain control of the Persian Gulf region will be regarded as an assault on the vital interests of the U.S."<sup>90</sup> The main purpose of the

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<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 2-3.

<sup>87</sup> Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, 167.

<sup>88</sup> McNamara, *Out of Cold*, 82.

<sup>89</sup> Jentleson, *American Foreign Policy*, 167.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

doctrine was to block the Soviets' expansion to the Gulf region. The détente-positive Carter administration chose hard-liner deterrence to secure its interests.

When Ronald Reagan was inaugurated as President in January 1981, U.S. foreign policy toward the USSR became more harsh and offensive. Since Reagan was a candidate for presidential election, he consistently criticized and opposed détente stating; "we are blind to reality if we refuse to recognize that détente's usefulness to the Soviets is only as a cover for their traditional and basic strategy for aggression."<sup>91</sup> President Reagan stressed decisive military responses against large Soviet military threats to Washington and its allies. The foreign policy framework of the Reagan administration was to oppose "acquiescence in the Cold War status quo."<sup>92</sup> Reagan preferred confrontational approaches rather than cooperative measures in détente, which developed into "the Reagan Doctrine," which "advocated opposition to Communist-supported regimes wherever they existed, as well as a willingness to directly challenge the Soviet Union on a variety of fronts."<sup>93</sup> With the Reagan Doctrine, Washington planned a wide array of military buildup to balance with the USSR. It believed that the Soviet Union's military power was superior to the U.S.<sup>94</sup> To redress the military imbalance, the White House focused on modernizing its armed forces and advancing military technologies. Above all, President Reagan concentrated on upgrading nuclear capabilities to reverse strategic imbalances. Since Congress agreed to increase defense budget, Reagan had no difficulty with conducting military modernization.

In March 1983, the Reagan administration's hard-liner stance against the USSR was culminated by two speeches. On March 8, President Reagan delivered "the Evil Empire speech" at the National Association of Evangelicals in Florida. He resolutely condemned the USSR's military actions that threatened worldwide peace and stability

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<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

<sup>92</sup> The U.S. Department of State, "1981-1988: The Presidency of Ronald W. Reagan," <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1981-1988>.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid.

<sup>94</sup> Goldman, *U.S. Policy toward Soviet Union*, 4.

and labeled the Soviet Union as “the focus of evil in the modern world.”<sup>95</sup> After two weeks, he made “the Star Wars speech.” President Reagan stated that his administration would initiate the Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI) plan and established the Strategic Defense Initiative Organization (SDIO). The SDI plan’s aim was to protect the U.S. from a massive launch of Soviets’ strategic nuclear ballistic missiles. The basic concept of the SDI was to “make nuclear weapons obsolete” through the interception of ballistic-missile warheads in space or ground.<sup>96</sup> The Soviet Union blamed the U.S. for aggravating arms competition, insisting that Moscow was only interested in homeland security.<sup>97</sup> Despite the Soviets’ criticism, Reagan consistently spent billions of dollars on the SDI plan. To isolate Moscow politically, Washington encouraged non-communist states to participate in a strategic coalition against the Soviet Union, emphasizing that the Soviets were serious threats to them. The Reagan administration strengthened cooperation with China, which was an important partner of the USSR, to check the USSR more efficiently.<sup>98</sup>

The U.S.-Soviet relationship fell to the lowest point, and it was impossible for the two nations to re-construct a cooperative relationship.<sup>99</sup> Reacting to escalated tensions with the Soviet Union, the U.S. reevaluated the geographical value of South Korea. The presence of the U.S. Forces Korea (USFK) played a key role in deterring the Soviet Union. Considering geographic proximity between South Korea and the Soviet Union, the USFK could address conflicts with the Soviet Union more effectively and quickly. In addition, the strong alliance with South Korea would provide the U.S. with a lodgment for projection of other military in a war against the Soviet Union.<sup>100</sup> Since the U.S. identified the Soviets as strong threats, it needed the benefits that Seoul offered.

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<sup>95</sup> Ronald Reagan, “The Evil Empire,” *Speeches of the American Presidents*, (2002): 882.

<sup>96</sup> Stephen J. Cimbala, *The Technology, Strategy, and Politics of SDI* (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1987), 1.

<sup>97</sup> Benjamin Lambeth and Kevin Lewis, “The Kremlin and SDI,” *Foreign Affairs* (1988): 757.

<sup>98</sup> Goldman, *U.S. Policy toward Soviet Union*, 3.

<sup>99</sup> McNamara, *Out of Cold*, 84.

<sup>100</sup> Detrio, “Strategic Partners: South Korea and United States,” 58

## **B. THE COHESION OF THE ALLIANCE**

After the Soviets' invasion of Afghanistan, Washington perceived Moscow as a strong threat. The changes in dominant U.S. threat perception led Washington to reevaluate the geographical value of the Korean Peninsula. The four indicators demonstrated that the shift in dominant U.S. threat perception influenced the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

### **1. Official Statements and Documents by Leaders**

In the 1980s, U.S. President Ronald W. Reagan and ROK President Chun Doo-hwan demonstrated their commitment to the U.S.-ROK alliance, which resulted in strong alliance cohesion. In the 1970s, the Carter administration had not been interested in improving the relationship with the ROK. Since President Carter focused on human rights policy, he did not recognize the ROK's authoritarian regime as a legitimate government. However, President Reagan emphasized the U.S.-ROK security relationship. Richard T. Detrio mentioned that Reagan's basic strategic objective in Asia was to contain the Soviet Union's expansion.<sup>101</sup> Detrio argued that since South Korea played a key role in the U.S. plan, "[Reagan] made no secret of the fact that The U.S. military posture in Asia in general and in South Korea in particular would be strengthened"<sup>102</sup> The Reagan administration regarded the Chun government as one of its key partners even though human rights in the ROK were not improved. With increasing Soviet threats, Reagan had to set the overarching goal as the winning the Cold War, unlike his predecessor. To secure allies' strong support was crucial for the U.S. to contain the USSR's expansion. Above all, Washington intended to strengthen the military relationship with South Korea, because President Reagan believed that "South Korea was to be a key element in the plan."<sup>103</sup> As the tension between the two Koreas was escalating, South Korea also needed the endorsement of the ROK's major patron, the U.S. Since North Korea executed provocations such as Rangoon bombing, the U.S.'s

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<sup>101</sup> Detrio, "Strategic Partners: South Korea and United States," 89.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

military support was essential for Seoul to deter Pyeongyang. Thus, the two countries aimed to reinforce the alliance again.

Three U.S.-ROK summit meetings between President Reagan and Chun demonstrated that the U.S.-ROK alliance was stronger than before. President Chun visited the U.S. in January 1981 and in April 1985, and invited President Reagan to Seoul in November 1983. Specifically, the first summit meeting was regarded as a symbol of the strengthened U.S.-ROK alliance. In February 1981, President Reagan invited President Chun as the first foreign President to visit the White House. Many countries' Presidents and politicians paid attention to this summit meeting. Since President Chun had cruelly suppressed the Gwangju democratization movement in May 1980, he was criticized by worldwide human rights organizations. Despite this criticism, the two Presidents exchanged their opinions on world affairs including the expansion of communism in Asia. Since Washington and Seoul shared an objective—the containment of the Soviet-bloc—both Presidents stressed the significance of the U.S.-ROK alliance; “President Reagan and President Chun pledged to uphold the mutual obligations embodied in the United States-Korea Mutual Defense Treaty of 1954.”<sup>104</sup> In the summit meeting, President Reagan stated that the U.S. would abolish the plan of U.S. ground combat forces’ withdrawal from South Korea. The maintaining of the USFK assured Seoul of Washington’s intentions for the reinforcement of the alliance. President Chun also emphasized a firm combined defense posture in South Korea and intended to improve the two nations’ relationship, saying “Our two nations will march forward as mature partners.” Reagan’s pledge to protect South Korea was reaffirmed by U.S. Secretary of Defense Weinberger at the thirteenth SCM. The U.S. invitation of President Chun showed the U.S.’s unswerving commitment to the ROK.

President Reagan officially visited Seoul in November 1983. The two Presidents reviewed security situations of Northeast Asia and international affairs. At the second meeting, President Reagan stressed that South Korea continued to back up the U.S. to

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<sup>104</sup> Presidential Library and Museum, “Joint Communique Following Discussions with President Chun Doo Hwan of the ROK,” <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1981/20281b.htm>.

maintain the stability in the East Asia as well as the U.S.<sup>105</sup> Reconfirming that the U.S. would not withdraw the USFK, President Reagan reiterated the strong commitment to repel any armed attack against South Korea. The two Presidents agreed to continue joint efforts for the improvement of the U.S.-ROK combined defense posture. In April 26, 1985, President Chun visited Washington again. President Reagan's aim was to tie its military relationship with South Korea more tightly. Stating that the U.S.-ROK mutual defense treaty was vital for the peace in Northeast Asia, Reagan announced, "The ties linking the Republic of Korea and the United States are many and strong."<sup>106</sup> President Chun agreed with Reagan, declaring the establishment of a close bilateral relationship. In three summit meetings, both presidents consistently reaffirmed their commitment to peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula and the East Asia.

Compared to the prior period, the number of the two countries' summit meetings increased. U.S. Presidents held three summit meetings with ROK President Roh Tae-woo, who was a successor of President Chun. In these three summit meetings, Both Presidents consistently reaffirmed their commitment to peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula and the East Asia. While only two summit meetings were held in Seoul in the 1970s, the U.S. and ROK presidents had six summit meetings in both Seoul and Washington in the 1980s. The Reagan administration had four meetings, and the Bush administration organized two. The increased number of summit meetings and Washington's invitations to ROK Presidents demonstrated strong U.S.-ROK partnership.<sup>107</sup>

In summary, President Reagan deemphasized Carter's human rights campaign against authoritarian regimes in order to establish a broad anti-communist bloc. As a result, the three U.S.-ROK summit meetings were held, which contributed to establishing a solid foundation for strong ties between the two countries. In all meetings, the two

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<sup>105</sup> Presidential Library and Museum, "Joint Statement Following Discussions with President Chun Doo Hwan of the ROK," <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1983/111483a.htm>.

<sup>106</sup> Presidential Library and Museum, "Remarks Following Discussions with President Chun Doo Hwan of the ROK," <http://www.reagan.utexas.edu/archives/speeches/1985/42685f.htm>.

<sup>107</sup> Kwak, "Alliance Institutionalization," 131.

presidents consistently made an effort to further consolidate their partnership. Therefore, with respect to the first indicator, alliance cohesion was strong again in the 1980s.

## **2. Combined Exercises and Operations**

In the 1980s, combined exercises and operations also showed strong alliance cohesion. After the CFC took over planning and supervising combined trainings, the three major exercises—the UFL, the Foal Eagle (F/E) exercise, and the Team Spirit—were developed further.<sup>108</sup> In order to deter North Korea and enhance combined operational readiness, diverse U.S.-ROK combined exercises and trainings were carried out. In addition, to further capabilities of combined operations, the ROK Navy joined the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC).

Introducing the technique of the Computer-Based Military Simulation called “war games,” the U.S. and ROK developed the UFL. The U.S. and ROK military could test their operation plan’s effects and find unexpected errors in their integrated operation plans.<sup>109</sup> In the past, the UFL had been conducted, depending on discussion and interaction between commanders and their staff. However, in the 1980s, the advance of computer and technology contributed to increasing the exercise’s effectiveness. The war game model objectively evaluated commanders’ orders and operation plans. Thus, the two militaries could attain proficiency in combined procedures of crisis management.

Contents of the F/E were largely expanded. The exercise had focused, in the past, on training Special Forces in combined special operations. However, as the CFC was established in 1979, participating troops were increased, and operation areas were not confined to the rear area but expanded to the front area.<sup>110</sup> Specifically, in 1986, the two countries added the anti-terrorism exercise to the F/E to prepare for the 1986 Seoul Asian game. The F/E demonstrated strong military and political relationships between Washington and Seoul.

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<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 147.

<sup>109</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, 1996 *Defense White Paper* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 1996), 75.

<sup>110</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, 2000 *Defense White Paper* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 2000), 204.

Since 1976, the Team Spirit exercise had been conducted to improve the interoperability of the U.S. and ROK forces and to deter North Korea's offensive-oriented military actions. In the 1970s, contents of the exercise were confined to amphibious operations, but in the 1980s, two major training components were newly added to this exercise: air maneuvers such as air assaults and ground trainings like river crossings.<sup>111</sup> With increased exercising components, the period of the exercise was extended. While it was ten days in the 1970s, the period was prolonged to seventy days in the 1980s. In addition, as about 200,000 U.S. and South Korean troops participated in the exercise, Team Spirit became a large-scale field maneuver at the Division level.

Seoul decided to join the Rim of the Pacific Exercise (RIMPAC) in the late 1980s. The RIMPAC was a combined sea maneuver exercise in the Pacific Ocean. The U.S. Third Fleet planned and supervised this exercise, and the ROK, Australia, Canada, Chile, England, and Japan participated. The exercise's goal was to improve mutual military cooperation among Pacific countries. In order to ensure the safety of sea lines of communication on major maritime routes, participating countries improved their common operation plans and readiness.<sup>112</sup> Following Seoul's decision, the ROK Navy joined in this exercise from 1990. In the 1980s, the range of the U.S. and ROK's military cooperation stretched multilateral exercises beyond bilateral trainings.

In short, the strengthening of the UFL, the F/E, and the Team Spirit exercise and the ROK's participation in the RIMPAC contributed to improving both armed forces' interoperability and facilitating the exchange of know-how on North Korea's diverse armed provocations.<sup>113</sup> Therefore, these exercises fostered combined operations and military capabilities to protect the ROK, which resulted in strong alliance cohesion.

### **3. The Institutionalization of the Alliance**

In the 1980s, the third indicator, the institutionalization of the alliance, demonstrated the strong cohesion of the alliance. The U.S. and ROK developed the SCM

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<sup>111</sup> Jee, "Alliance Security Culture and Alliance Cohesiveness," 122.

<sup>112</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper*, 336.

<sup>113</sup> Kwak, "Alliance Institionalization," 147.

into an advanced communication channel. Since the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the ROK Defense Minister discussed all the security issues in the Korean Peninsula, the SCM was transformed into a comprehensive security meeting. When Washington and Seoul initiated the SCM in 1968, the role of the SCM was confined to restatement of their presidents' announcements. In the SCM, the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the ROK Defense Minister did not have authority to decide military strategies and guidelines on key security issues. However, in the 1980s, the SCM evolved into a "substantial policy consultative meeting."<sup>114</sup> The U.S. Secretary and the ROK Minister were able to design countermeasures against their shared security threats; "It found solutions to major pending security issues based on mutual consultations and explored the direction of long-term development of their bilateral military relations."<sup>115</sup> Joint communiques issued just after the SCM became significant guidelines for the two countries' security agencies including the CFC and the USFK. Considering that the communication channel was intensified, the two countries' military relationship was tied.

The U.S. and ROK advanced logistics and maintenance programs to maintain their high interoperability. Washington and Seoul agreed to build three new programs to make wartime logistics support systems sophisticated: the Wartime Host Nation Support (WHNS), the revision of the War Reserve Stocks for Allies (WRSA), and the Mutual Logistics Support Agreement (MLSA).<sup>116</sup> The two countries' shared aim was to enable the U.S. armed forces in the U.S. mainland to deploy into South Korea more quickly. Since many troops of the USFK were withdrawn from South Korea in the 1970s, the U.S. would have to transport many soldiers and a great deal of military equipment in wartime. In addition, the two countries' military interoperability was enhanced, because South Korea exclusively purchased U.S. arms, and the number of combined exercises was increased.

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<sup>114</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2000 Defense White Paper*, 91.

<sup>115</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2004 Defense White Paper* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 2004), 58.

<sup>116</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper*, 336.

The major purpose of the WHNS was to provide South Korea's military and civilian resources, such as trains and buses, for U.S. forces deployed to South Korea. In order to move the U.S. military into battlefields, the two countries specified transporting plans within South Korea. The WHNS included two major missions. One was the reception and onward movement of the U.S. military, and the other was transporting military supplies to the frontline for sustaining their units' war capabilities.<sup>117</sup> The U.S. Secretary of Defense and the ROK Defense Minister exchanged their opinions at the 17th SCM in 1985 and finally agreed to create the WHNS at the 19th SCM in 1987.

The two nations revised the WRSA. The WRSA referred to the U.S.'s war reserve stocks, such as weapons, ammunitions, and food supplies, in its allied countries. The WRSA in South Korea provided military supplies only for the USFK and augmented U.S. military. However, the revision of the WRSA allowed the USFK to provide military materials for the ROK military; the two nations signed the Critical Requirements Deficiency List (CRDL) as a provision of the WRSA. Because ordinary arms sales should be reviewed and approved by the U.S. Congress, South Korea would have difficulty providing required military equipment to its military in the case of an early stage of a war. South Korea's military industries did not have a high enough level of technology in weapon systems and facilities to produce a massive amount of military supplies. Two revisions of the WRSA in 1982 and 1984 enabled the ROK to purchase the U.S. arms without waiting for the U.S. Congress's approval. Prompt resupply of war materials would be possible at the early stage of war.

The MLSA was signed in 1988 to improved mutual logistics support between the U.S. and ROK armed forces. As the two countries' military relationship was loser, the number of combined exercises, trainings, and operations greatly increased. As a result, requirements for unexpected supply or maintenance were raised. The MLSA's goal was to respond to these demands more quickly and effectively; "The mutual logistics support process begins with a request from one party, and the other party provides support, which

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

shall be paid back with materials of the same kind, service, or cash.”<sup>118</sup> The MLSA contributed to improving both armed forces’ operational sustainability.

In summary, in the 1980s, the U.S. and ROK evolved the SCM into a superior comprehensive security meeting and improved logistics systems by establishing three agreements. The SCM’s reinforcement led the two nations to understand each other’s intentions and facilitate cooperation. The advance in logistics systems contributed to improving interoperability. As a result, alliance cohesion became stronger than during the prior period.

#### **4. Combined Military Capability**

The fourth indicator, combined military capability, showed that alliance cohesion was becoming strong in the 1980s. The two states spent billions of dollars on a combined defense posture to improve their interoperability. President Reagan’s guidelines led the U.S. government to consistently provide a great deal of military aid for the ROK military through diverse supporting programs. President Reagan believed that the modernization of the ROK would contribute to protecting U.S. security by checking the Soviet Union’s expansion. In return, South Korea started to support the expense of the USFK from 1989 with its rapid economic growth.

At the summit meeting in 1981, ROK President Chun announced that South Korea would improve its self-reliant defense capabilities through the modernization of its armed forces. President Reagan confirmed that the U.S. would support the ROK’s modernization plan by increasing the amount of military aid to South Korea, providing defense industry technologies, and selling the newest weapon systems.<sup>119</sup> Regarding the ROK’s military modernization, the shared purpose of Presidents Reagan and Chun was to make North Korea abandon any form of aggression by upgrading the U.S-ROK combined military strength.

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<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

<sup>119</sup> Presidential Library and Museum, “Joint Communiqué.”

Following President Reagan's intentions, the U.S. government planned three grant programs to back up the ROK military's modernization: the military Assistance Program (MAP), the Military Assistance Service Fund (MASF), and the International Military education and Training (IMET) program. In the 1980s, the total cost of these three programs was over \$366 million.<sup>120</sup> Considering that the total budget of U.S. foreign security assistance was \$1,813 million, South Korea received 20.9%. Given that in the 1970s, the ROK's proportion was just 13%, the U.S. increased its commitment to South Korea in the 1980s.<sup>121</sup> Although the U.S.'s economic recession and the failure of the Vietnam War caused the U.S. government to reduce the amount of foreign aid, the U.S. government provided a large amount of military support to South Korea. The U.S. Congress also backed military aid to the ROK. It approved the increased of the Foreign Military Sales loan from \$129 million in 1980 to \$160 million in 1981 and to \$167.5 million in 1982.<sup>122</sup> Washington allowed Seoul to purchase cutting edge military weapon systems including "36 F-16 Air fighters, air defense systems, M55-1 light tanks, and other military hardware."<sup>123</sup> Since the U.S. DOD sold its advanced arms only to its major allies, arms sales demonstrated that the U.S. recognized the ROK as its key ally.

In order to enhance a combined defense posture, the U.S. made an effort to not only modernize the ROK military but also strengthen the USFK's capabilities. The U.S. upgraded the 2nd Infantry Division's equipment overall. The U.S. DOD redeployed A-10 aircrafts to improve anti-armor capability, increased the number of F-16 air fighters for superiority in the air, and upgraded the early warning systems. The USFK presence without additional withdrawals and its constant improvement of its capabilities sent a strong signal that the U.S. commitment was continued to protect the ROK from the DPRK's offensive operations.

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<sup>120</sup> Kwak, "Alliance Instiutionalization," 150.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid., 151.

<sup>122</sup> Dae-sook Suh, "South Korea in 1981: The First Year of the Fifth Republic," *Asian Survey* 22, no. 1, A Survey of Asia in 1981: Part I (January 1982): 111.

<sup>123</sup> Ibid.

In the 1980s, South Korea achieved a rapid economic growth known as “the miracle of the Han River.” Washington required Seoul to increase its proportion of the costs for the station the USFK.<sup>124</sup> At the 20th SCM, the U.S. Secretary of Defense and the ROK Defense Minister signed the agreement of defense cost-sharing; South Korea started to provide monetary support for the expense of stationing U.S. troops in South Korea.<sup>125</sup> As a result, Seoul provided \$45 million in 1989 for the USFK. The costs of the ROK’s military security started to shift from Washington to Seoul. The ROK reinforced its commitment to the USFK by providing economic support, which contributed to strengthening alliance cohesion. Therefore, in the 1980s, alliance cohesion became stronger than during the prior period.

### C. CONCLUSION

In the 1980s, alliance cohesion was strong. After the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan, the U.S. and the USSR restarted their military competition called the “second Cold War.” The sharp military confrontation led U.S. foreign policy to roll back to hard-liner deterrence. Announcing “the Reagan Doctrine,” President Reagan reintroduced diverse containment policies including the SDI. He not only strengthened U.S. military might but also intended to reinforce the U.S.’s alliances; “Washington’s policies regarding the USSR must take into account the requirements of maintaining stable alliance relations.”<sup>126</sup> To obtain allied countries’ support was essential for Washington in order to contain the Soviet Union’s expansion.

Based on changed security environments, the four indicators in the 1980s clearly demonstrated that alliance cohesion became stronger than during the prior period. With regard to the first indicator, official statements and documents by leaders, the inauguration of President Ronald Reagan in 1981 led the U.S. and ROK to establish more close military relationship than ever before. President Reagan focused on strengthening this alliance to check the USSR. As a result, six summit meetings were held, compared to

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<sup>124</sup> Kwak, “Alliance Institutionalization,” 152.

<sup>125</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, “the 20th SCM Joint Communiqué,” [http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I\\_43915&page=2&id=mnd\\_010604000000](http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I_43915&page=2&id=mnd_010604000000).

<sup>126</sup> Goldman, *U.S. Policy Toward Soviet Union*, 5.

two summit meetings in the 1970s. The two nations' presidents consistently emphasized the significance of the alliance. President Reagan affirmed the U.S. commitment to South Korea by cancelling the withdrawal plan of the USFK. ROK Presidents Chun and Roh replied to the U.S. commitment by supporting the U.S. leadership in East Asia.

The second indicator, combined exercises and operations, showed strong alliance cohesion. The strengthening of combined exercises and operations—the UFL, the F/E, the Team Spirit exercise, and the ROK's participation in the RIMPAC—contributed to improving the interoperability of the two nations' armed forces. Introduction of computer based training techniques led the U.S. and ROK commanders, staff, and troops to enhance their effectiveness in exercises. In addition to having diverse exercises, both armed forces exchanged know-how about how to fight North Korea and understood their partners' strategies and military tactics.

The third indicator, institutionalization of the alliance, was greatly developed. Since the SCM evolved into the most important security communication channel, it started to address all kinds of security issues and decided strategies and responses. The development of the SCM contributed to enhancing the two countries' security cooperation. Three U.S.-ROK logistics support programs were created to improve war fighting capability and guarantee war-sustaining capabilities. The U.S. could deploy its armed forces from outside military bases to the Korean peninsula, and South Korea could receive required military materials and maintenance supporting from the USFK. Thus, the level of cooperation and interoperability between the two nations was raised.

The last indicator, combined military capabilities, showed the U.S.'s high interest in the alliance, which resulted in strong alliance cohesion. The U.S. planned diverse military aid programs and augmented the USFK's weapon systems. Furthermore, the U.S.-ROK military relationship evolved into a partnership because the two countries started to talk about defense cost-sharing. As the ROK covered some costs for the USFK's stationing, the military relationship between the two countries was solidified.

In the 1980s, the four indicators together demonstrated that alliance cohesion was becoming stronger than the 1970s. Since the Soviets' threats against the U.S. had greatly

increased, the U.S. aimed to strength the alliance. The main driver, encouraging the two countries to strengthen alliance cohesion, was changes in dominant U.S. threat perception, the second Cold War.

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## IV. THE COLLAPSE OF THE USSR IN THE 1990S

### A. THE U.S. DOMINANT SECURITY OUTLOOK

U.S. President George H. W. Bush and USSR leader Mikhail Gorbachev held a summit meeting at Malta in December 1990. At this summit, Bush and Gorbachev declared an end to the Cold War. Thus, only the U.S. remained a superpower. In the late 1980s, Gorbachev concluded that the Soviets would no longer continue their competition with the U.S. The economic gap between the two countries was becoming wider, and the U.S. had planned the SDI (Strategic Defense Initiative) for military superiority. Moscow could not catch up with Washington's economic and military power. In the end, the Soviets were disestablished, and "worldwide American hegemony" emerged.<sup>127</sup> Since it did not have external security threats, Washington focused on dealing with domestic problems and improving the U.S. economy.

#### 1. Major Driving Events

In the 1990s, the U.S. did not have a severe security threat, because its rival, the USSR, collapsed. The Soviet Union's satellite regimes started to collapse one by one after 1989. Specifically, on November 9, the Berlin Wall, which was a symbol of the Cold War, was torn down, and the two Germanys achieved unification. After two years later, Mikhail Gorbachev officially announced the disestablishment of the Soviet Union, which meant the end of the Cold War.

In the late 1980s, the Soviets faced crises such as economic recession and the failure of the Third World competition. To deal with these perils, Gorbachev greatly reformed its domestic and foreign policies rather than continue to confront the U.S. He announced "the new thinking." Its overarching objective was to reduce threats from the U.S.<sup>128</sup> The new thinking consisted of two principles; one was *glasnost* (openness) in the politic, and the other was *perestroika* (restructuring) in the economy. *Glasnost*

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<sup>127</sup> Jean-Pierre Contzen and Jacques Groothaert, "The Collapse of the Soviet Union," *Agriculture, Human Security, and Global Peace: A Crossroad in African Development* (2008), 35.

<sup>128</sup> Jentelson, *American Foreign Policy*, 190.

guaranteed the Soviet people's political freedoms such as freedom of the press. To admit opponents' opinions would end the dictatorship of the Communist party. *Perestroika* led to significant changes in economic systems. By allowing an open market, free private commercial transactions and foreign trades were facilitated. Under the pro-western atmosphere, civilian movements in Poland, Hungary, and East Germany succeeded in removing authoritarian regimes and establishing democracy. Gorbachev accepted overthrow of his satellite communist regimes: "Gorbachev did not send a single tank into any East European country [to protect communist governments]."<sup>129</sup>

Gorbachev concentrated on renegotiating arms control with the U.S. The Soviet Union had more nuclear weapons, but strained to match the U.S. military posture more broadly. Although some U.S. politicians doubted Gorbachev's intentions, the White House began to negotiate arms control with Moscow. Washington needed to prevent hardliners of the Soviet Union from grasping the power and restarting military confrontations.<sup>130</sup> As a result, the two nations signed two significant negotiations: Conventional Armed Forces in Europe (CFE) and Strategic Arms Reduction (START). The two agreements led the two countries to reduce the number of strategic nuclear weapons from about 30,000 to fewer than 7,000.<sup>131</sup> Melanson argued, "These treaties effectively ended the EAST-WEST military confrontation of almost a half-century."<sup>132</sup> As a result, the Soviet Union's influence on Eastern countries was greatly decreased. Although Russia still possessed nuclear warheads, it no longer maintained an influential status in the world, and the U.S. became the sole superpower in the 1990s.

## **2. U.S. Perception and Response**

The U.S. security environment was greatly changed, because the Cold War ended in 1990. In the late 1980s, the U.S. cautiously reacted to Gorbachev's suggestions that emphasized peaceful coexistence through arms control. As the USSR reduced its nuclear

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<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Richard A. Melanson, *American Foreign Policy since the Vietnam War: The Search for Consensus from Nixon to Clinton* (New York: ME Sharpe, 2005), 205.

<sup>131</sup> Ibid.

<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

warheads and admitted democratic movements in the Eastern bloc, the U.S. started to cooperate with the Soviet Union. In 1990, Gorbachev declared the disestablishment of the USSR. The U.S. had to reconsider and adjust its global deterrence strategy, because its foreign policies' assumptions and strategies obsolete. Above all, "The U.S. is both unwilling and unable to serve as policeman of the world."<sup>133</sup> Americans no longer agreed to spend billions of dollars on foreign policy projects and urged the government to return to isolationism.<sup>134</sup>

Since the Soviets' threat fully reduced, security no longer was the top priority of the Clinton administration. President Bill Clinton strengthened economic institutions rather than security agencies. President Clinton reflected this changed U.S. citizens' attitude in his policies: "Unlike the experience of his Cold War predecessors, domestic issues defined Clinton's presidency."<sup>135</sup> Since he was a presidential candidate, Clinton had been interested in social and economic matters rather than foreign issues. Joseph Nye, Jr. supported this view: "As the sole superpower, Americans did not pay much attention to foreign policy."<sup>136</sup> As Clinton was inaugurated as President in 1993, Washington redefined U.S. foreign policy and security agencies' roles to meet the new era's demands.<sup>137</sup>

The authority of security agencies such as the National Security Council (NSC) decreased. The U.S. Congress and Americans doubted the effectiveness of the NSC in the new era. Since U.S. security environment greatly changed, the U.S. needed to create a new pivotal agency; The NSC had emphasized military operations to deal with national security concerns, the council could not be adequate to manage economic and ecological

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<sup>133</sup> Howard J. Wiarda, *US Foreign and Strategic Policy in the Post-Cold War Era* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1996), viii.

<sup>134</sup> Joseph S. Nye Jr, "The Future of American Power: Dominance and Decline in Perspective," in *The Domestic Sources of American Foreign Policy: Insights and Evidence*, eds. Eugene R. Wittkopf and James M. McCormick (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012): 29.

<sup>135</sup> Melanson, *American Foreign Policy since the Vietnam War*, 233.

<sup>136</sup> Nye, "Future of American Power," 17.

<sup>137</sup> Vincent A. Auger, "The National Security Council System After the Cold War," in *US Foreign Policy After the Cold War*, eds. Randall B. Ripley and James M. Lindsay (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997): 42

issues.<sup>138</sup> Military actions, personnel, and equipment were largely decreased: “[The plan] reduce the armed services from 1.7 million to 1.4 million personnel, the number of navy carriers from fourteen to twelve, and air wings from twenty-four to twenty.”<sup>139</sup> Although the U.S. Secretary of Defense consistently argued the importance of military interventions by conducting several operations, his proposal could not delay the pace of reduction under without a clear security threat. Budget of security agencies including the DOD, the NSC, and the CIA were sharply cut.

President Clinton hesitated to intervene in foreign issues. Although the world hoped that the U.S. would handle humanitarian problems in Somalia and Haiti, Clinton was seen by some observers to regard these as “inconvenient public relations problems,” not as security problems.<sup>140</sup> He conditionally approved military actions against Yugoslavia and Iraq; The Pentagon could conduct military operations only by using air strikes. For the Clinton administration, to reduce the risk of any combat casualties was much more important than decisive winning through ground operations. Its aim was to avoid facing severe opposing public opinions.

After President Clinton reformulated U.S. priorities, economic issues became the most significant policies. He planned the establishment of the Economic Security Council by defining economic interests as his administration’s foreign policy.<sup>141</sup> The council aimed to boost its economy by facilitating foreign trade; it encouraged the U.S.’s companies to invest to foreign market.<sup>142</sup> Since it focused on international trade, the council could control foreign policies as well as domestic policies. The policy was continued for a while. President George W. Bush also gave a top priority to economy rather than security when he was running and first elected. President Bush shared a perspective on security threats with his predecessor. He could not obtain the legitimacy to act as the worldwide peacemaker and to expand its security bureaucracies.

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<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>139</sup> Peter L. Hahn, “Grand Strategy,” in *U.S. Foreign Policy After the Cold War*, eds. Randall B. Ripley and James M. Lindsay (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2004), 206.

<sup>140</sup> Melanson, *American Foreign Policy since the Vietnam War*, 241.

<sup>141</sup> Auger, “National Security Council System,” 42.

<sup>142</sup> Melanson, *American Foreign Policy since the Vietnam War*, 351

The change in dominant U.S. threat perception influenced the relationship between the U.S. and the ROK. Without a clear and grave enemy in East Asia, the U.S. was less interested in its alliances with Asian countries. The U.S.'s significant agenda was not security but the economy. Washington's intentions negatively influenced the U.S.-ROK alliance. The reduced Soviet threats indicated that "developments on the Korean Peninsula are less relevant to the U.S."<sup>143</sup> South Korea no longer was a vital region, and the U.S. regarded the ROK as "one component of a larger mission to ensure stability in the Far East."<sup>144</sup>

## **B. THE COHESION OF THE ALLIANCE**

The collapse of the USSR led to drastic changes in the U.S.-ROK alliance. The U.S. did not need to maintain the strong alliance with South Korea. Seoul could not provide great benefits with the U.S., because the U.S.'s top priority was to recover its economy. The four indicators demonstrated that the shift in dominant U.S. threat perception influenced the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

### **1. Official Statements and Documents by Leaders**

Based on changed security environments, U.S. legislators and Presidents did not need to strengthen the U.S.-ROK alliance as before. In July 1989, the U.S. Senator Sam Nunn submitted the Nunn-Warner Amendment, which required the government to re-evaluate U.S. military commitment to East Asia. He emphasized that the U.S. should readjust its military bases, strength structure, and missions because the Cold War, in fact, had ended peacefully. The Amendment demanded the U.S. administration reduce the number of the USFK immediately and negotiate a gradual withdrawal of the USFK with Seoul. U.S. Congress passed the Nunn-Warner Amendment and begun to press for the withdrawal of the USFK. The U.S. Department of Defense reassessed U.S. armed forces' missions and locations, reflecting the Soviet Union's diminished security threats and

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<sup>143</sup> Ted Galen Carpenter, "South Korea: A Vital Or Peripheral U.S. Security Interest?" in *The US-South Korean Alliance: Time for a Change*, eds. Doug Bandow and Ted Galen Carpenter (New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1992): 10.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

defense budget cuts. In the end, President Bush signed the East Asia Strategic Initiative (EASI) in April 1990.<sup>145</sup> The EASI proposed to “transition U.S. forces on the peninsula from a leading role to a supporting role.”<sup>146</sup> It also required the South Korean administration to increase its proportion of defense cost-sharing.<sup>147</sup> Through the EASI, the U.S. aimed to decrease its commitment to this alliance. William J. Crowe argued that the EASI stemmed from the American post-Vietnam strategy to confine the role of the U.S. armed forces.<sup>148</sup> Allied partners had to bear greater responsibilities for their own defense by maintaining the large ground combat with a lot of budget, and the U.S. provided limited supports through its Air Force and Navy.

In compliance with the Nunn-Warner Amendment and the EASI, the U.S. officially announced plans to reduce the USFK. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney planned to reduce the number of the USF in the early 1990s.<sup>149</sup> The Pentagon designed a 10-year and 3-phase gradual reduction. At the 22nd SCM in November 1990, U.S. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney officially informed the plan of the USFK’s reduction.<sup>150</sup> As a result, about 7,000 U.S. forces withdrew from the ROK to the U.S.

Although Seoul required Washington to stop or hold the withdrawal of the USFK, it was not desperate to cancel this policy. Since Seoul had greatly developed its economy and normalized its diplomatic relationships with communist countries, it considered that the certain amount of the USFK would be sufficient to prevent North Korea from executing provocations. In the 1980s, the ROK succeeded in achieving double-digit economic growth; it was known as “the miracle of Han River.” Based on the strong economic power, the ROK Roh Tae-woo administration initiated *Nordpolitik* (northern

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<sup>145</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *A Strategic Framework for the Asian Pacific Rim: Looking toward the 21st Century*, (Washington DC: Department of Defense, 1990), 1-20.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> William J. Crowe and Alan D. Romberg, “Rethinking Security in the Pacific,” *Foreign Affairs* 70, no. 2 (Spring 1991): 131.

<sup>149</sup> Timothy E. Wirth, “Afterword: A Korea Policy for the 1990s,” in *The U.S.-South Korean Alliance*, eds. Doug Bandow and Ted Galen Carpenter (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 1992): 199.

<sup>150</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, “the 22th SCM Joint Communiqué,” [http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I\\_43915&page=2&id=mnd\\_010604000000](http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I_43915&page=2&id=mnd_010604000000).

diplomacy), in the late 1980s. This policy's purpose was to normalize its relationship with communist countries like China and Russia. Seoul intended to isolate Pyeongyang politically and enlarge the economic gap between the two Korea. Seoul confidently evaluated that it could unify with North Korea by diplomatic and economic means beyond deterring Pyeongyang's provocations. Although South Korea was still a client of the U.S., it gradually expressed its intentions on foreign policy toward North Korea and diverse alliance issues. This resulted in intra-alliance tension, which weakened the alliance.

## **2. Combined Exercises and Operations**

In the 1990s, four important U.S.-ROK combined exercises were the Ulchi Focus Lens (UFL), the Foal Eagle (F/E), Reception, Staging, Onward Movement, and integration (RSOI), and the Team spirit (TS). Since the commander of the CFC possessed the wartime OPCON, the U.S. had a responsibility for exercises to prepare war. However, as the U.S. changed its role from a leading role to a supporting role, it planned to transfer its responsibility for combined exercises and operations to the ROK military. As reviewed below, the evolution of these combined exercises during this period demonstrated the U.S. low commitment to the U.S.-ROK alliance.

Since the 1990s, the UFL had been transformed into a comprehensive exercise by connecting the South Korean government's crisis management training, the Choongmu Plan. The UFL became the integrated exercise including both the military and the government. It consisted of two parts. The first part focused on increasing cooperation between the military and the government. ROK government officials, both U.S. and ROK military troops, and many business companies for mobilization were participated in the first part of the UFL. The second one was a military-oriented exercise for the two countries' combined armed forces. The CFC controlled and managed the exercise. However, the ROK Joint Chief of Staff (JCS) began to lead the UFL. Through many consultations and discussions with the CFC, the ROK JCS started to plan, execute, and review the UFL. The ROK JCS's leading role separated exercises from operations, because the CFC commander still had wartime OPCON. Although the ROK controlled

exercises, the CFC would lead operations in contingencies. Considering that exercises should be the same as operations, the effectiveness of exercises greatly decreased.

The Foal Eagle (F/E) exercise was an annual US-ROK combined field maneuver. Its aim was to improve the combined operational posture. By developing combined Special Forces' capabilities, the two countries deterred North Korea's war provocations and exchanged their significant lessons. When the Team Spirit was fully cancelled (see below), the F/E became the biggest combined field training exercise (FTX). More military troops participated in the F/E, and its training contents were expanded: chemical decontamination operations, rear area defense, and noncombatant evacuations.<sup>151</sup> Regional or global conflicts, such as the Persian Gulf War and the Kosovo incident, were involved in the F/E. These contents were closely related to the U.S. military's missions but the ROK armed forces did not involve them into its military duties. The interested area was not limited in the Korean Peninsula, but was enlarged into the Asia-Pacific region.

The two countries agreed to newly establish the RSOI exercise in 1994, which demonstrated the U.S. objective. The U.S. military strategy toward South Korea focused on augmenting its forces in contingency rather than maintaining sufficient troops in South Korea. The RSOI included "the processes of reception, staging, movement to the forward area, and integration of U.S. augmentation forces that would be deployed."<sup>152</sup> The ROK DOD, JCS, the CFC, USFK participated in the exercise. This exercise clearly showed the U.S. role's changed from leading to supporting.

The Team Spirit exercise had contributed to deterring North Korea's offensive-oriented military actions by demonstrating the strong U.S.-ROK security cooperation. Its main scenario was to protect the South from the North's invasion and take over Pyeongyang city through counter attack operations. In 1991, the exercise was scaled down due to the U.S.'s participation in Persian Gulf War and defense budget cuts. North Korea repeatedly condemned the Team Spirit exercise and strongly demanded the two

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<sup>151</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2000 Defense White Paper*, 71.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 70

nations to cancel it. Since Team Spirit provided the two nations with opportunities to plan and practice an attack against North Korea, the two armed forces could find errors in their plan and gain proficiency. However, in 1992, Team Spirit was suspended to encourage Pyeongyang to accept international inspections about its suspected nuclear facilities. Due to Pyeongyang's denial to nuclear inspections, the two nations resumed Team Spirit in 1993. However, Washington and Seoul agreed to suspend the 1994 Team Spirit exercise, because they considered that soft-approach would be more effective to deal with North Korea's nuclear problem. The two countries intended to encourage Pyeongyang to receive the IAEA inspection. Subsequently, the Team Spirit exercises no longer have been held to provide the DPRK with an incentive to abandon nuclear weapons.<sup>153</sup> Considering that the exercise had been demonstrated strong alliance cohesion, the cancellation damaged the defense readiness of the U.S. and ROK forces.

In summary, as the U.S. increasingly saw itself as providing a supporting role in the U.S.-ROK alliance, the responsibility for combined exercises and operations was transferred to the ROK. This transition, combined with cancellation of the Team Spirit exercise, produced overall weaker alliance cohesion.

### **3. The Institutionalization of the Alliance**

The U.S. and ROK agreed to transfer peacetime OPCON from the CFC to the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS). The U.S. and South Korea eliminated institutions that forced the USFK to engage in South Korea's conflict in peacetime. The U.S. could decide interventions following its national interests. In addition, as the ROK took over several of the USFK's missions, the U.S. reduced responsibilities for defending Seoul.

In July 1950, President Rhee Syng-man decided to transfer operational control (OPCON) over the ROK armed forces to the United Nations Command (UNC) in order to defend South Korea and win the Korean War. The Commander-in-Chief of the UNC, General Douglas MacArthur, controlled and ordered the ROK military. After the Korean War, the ROK required that the UNC would keep OPCON over the ROK military. Its

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<sup>153</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2010 Defense White Paper*, 71.

aim was to ensure the UNC's commitment to protect South Korea from North Korea.<sup>154</sup> When the CFC was created in 1978, the commander of the CFC took on OPCON. This ensured the U.S. commitment to South Korea. After the end of the Cold War, Seoul prepared to retake peacetime OPCON from the CFC. South Korea regarded the return of peacetime OPCON as achieving the first step of national self-reliance. Washington agreed with Seoul's proposal to transfer peacetime OPCON, because it newly defined the USFK's role as supporting.<sup>155</sup> In addition, since U.S. foreign policies, including the Nunn-Warner Amendment and the EASI, required the government to reduce its costs and efforts to protect South Korea, the Bush administration accepted the ROK's proposal. At the 26th SCM in October 1994, Washington and Seoul officially agreed to the transfer of peacetime OPCON.<sup>156</sup> On 1 December 1994, peacetime OPCON was transferred to the Chairman of the ROK JCS from the CFC commander.

After the transfer of peacetime OPCON, the U.S. did not take responsibility for South Korea's security during peacetime. Peacetime OPCON that the CFC commander had exercised before forced the CFC and the USFK to intervene in North Korea's infiltrations against South Korea. However, after the transfer, the CFC and the USFK did not have to engage in South Korea's conflicts in peacetime.

As Table 2 shows, the number of North Korea's infiltrations in the 1990s was the highest of the decades included. Despite North Korea increased threats, U.S. military support and the USFK's intervention were not mandatory. The transfer of peacetime OPCON drastically changed this alliance institution of the U.S. and the ROK, which weakened the combined defense posture.

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<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 80.

<sup>155</sup> Kwak, "Alliance Institutionalization," 259.

<sup>156</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, "The 26th SCM Joint Communiqué," [http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I\\_43915&page=2&id=mnd\\_010604000000](http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I_43915&page=2&id=mnd_010604000000).

Table 2. Major cases of infiltrations and provocations<sup>157</sup>

Year	Number	Contents
1960s	6	e.g., 31 commandos assault near Cheongwadae
1970s	7	e.g., Ax murder incident at Panmunjom
1980s	5	e.g., Korean Air flight (KAL 858) is blown up in midair
1990s	10	e.g., submarine infiltration with the reconnaissance units

Under peacetime OPCON, Seoul received missions from the USFK. The ROK Army was responsible for the Joint Security Area (JSA), and the ROK 3rd Army Corps defended the western part of the DMZ replacing the U.S. 3rd Brigade. In December 1992, a Korean four-star general, Ryu Byeng-hyun, was appointed as the Deputy Commander of the CFC and the Ground Component commander. In addition, as the US-ROK Combined Field Army (CFA) was disbanded, many U.S. troops left South Korea. While South Korea had more responsibility for its security, the U.S.'s missions were reduced. This reduced U.S. duties prevented the USFK from being involved in South Korea's conflicts and even enabled the U.S. to refuse South Korea's demands. Considering that an alliance institution compels a country to support its allies, alliance cohesion became weak.

#### 4. Combined Military Capability

Although the U.S. was still the major arms seller to South Korea, Seoul made an effort to diversify its arms sources including Indonesia and Russia. Compared to the past during which South Korea exclusively purchased U.S. weapons, this effort was significant. As the South Korean economy had advanced, the U.S. and South Korea began to negotiate defense cost-sharing for the presence of the USFK. An appropriate level of defense cost-sharing between the U.S. and the ROK could contribute to solidifying the combined defense posture. However, the two countries differently defined the term "appropriate."

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<sup>157</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2010 Defense White Paper*, 314.

South Korea had modernized its outdated weapon systems through the U.S.'s military aid, because it could not afford the costs of military upgrading. In the 1990s, although the U.S. no longer provided military aid, South Korea could finance to the necessary budget for its military modernization with its developed economic power. South Korea mainly purchased U.S. arms; in 1991, U.S. arms exceeded 60% of the total amount of arms expenditure. However, Seoul began to consider non-U.S. arms purchasing. Non-U.S. arms were normally cheaper than U.S. arms, and South Korea also had a chance to sell its arms reciprocally.<sup>158</sup> For Seoul, obtaining economic interests was important. When South Korea purchased eight CN-235 transport planes from Indonesia, Indonesia bought South Korean trucks that had the same costs of the planes.<sup>159</sup>

Because Russian President Boris Yeltsin perceived dealing with the ROK as desirable, the relationship between Seoul and Moscow developed into a close partnership.<sup>160</sup> Based on the amicable atmosphere, Moscow became Seoul's second largest military supplier after the U.S.<sup>161</sup> In the late 1990s, Russia's arms companies proposed diverse cutting edge weapon system for South Korea. In terms of costs and benefits, South Korea was interested in Russian arms; the price and terms of purchase met the ROK's requirements. Victor D. Cha provided examples: "the Russian T-80 main battle tank is half the price of the U.S. M1A1 Abrams, and two-thirds the production cost of the domestic K-1 tank."<sup>162</sup> Moreover, core technologies would be transferred to from Russia to South Korea if Seoul bought Russian arms. This transfer of technology would contribute to develop the ROK's domestic military technologies. The ROK and Russia signed a military technology agreement to strengthen their military cooperation. In 1999, South Korea planned to involve the Russian 636 Kilo submarine into the KSS-II project,

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<sup>158</sup> Victor D. Cha, "Strategic Culture and the Military Modernization of South Korea," *Armed Forces & Society* 28, no. 1 (2001): 109-12, doi:10.1177/0095327.

<sup>159</sup> Cha, "Strategic Culture and Military Modernization of South Korea," 109.

<sup>160</sup> Tae-Hwan Kwak and Seung-Ho Joo. "Military Cooperation between Russia and South Korea," *International Journal of Korean Unification Studies* (1999): 149.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid., 148.

<sup>162</sup> Cha, "Strategic Culture and Military Modernization of South Korea," 109.

the ROK's Navy modernization program.<sup>163</sup> For South Korea, economic profits were as significant as interoperability with the U.S.

Before 1991, the U.S. did not require defense cost-sharing for South Korea and even constructed military facilities in South Korea with no the ROK's fund. Moreover, Washington provided unconditional financial and military support to Seoul. These U.S. actions were taken because Seoul's economy was weak. However, in the 1990s, South Korea succeeded in developing its economy; some called this the "miracle of Han River." Since South Korea enjoyed economic prosperity, the U.S. stopped offering unitary support for the ROK and demanded Seoul take more responsibility for its own security. U.S. Secretary of Defense Richard Cheney announced, "[The U.S.] should continue to urge South Korea to assume a greater share of financial support for U.S. forward deployed forces."<sup>164</sup> The U.S. no longer provided unconditional support.

The U.S. strongly urged South Korea to increase its proportions of the defense cost-sharing. In 1991, at the 23rd SCM, the two nations' defense ministers agreed to the first Special Measures Agreement (SMA) for the period of 1991–1995. The ROK should provide \$150 million in 1991, annually increase its costs twenty percent, and pay \$300 million in 1995.<sup>165</sup> In the second SMA, covering the period of 1996–1998, South Korea consistently increased its proportions of burden sharing: \$330 million in 1996 and \$363 million in 1997. When the Asian Financial Crisis severely damaged the South Korean economy in 1997, the exchange rate soared to almost double. Considering the ROK's difficulty in securing dollars, the two countries agreed to involve the Korean Won in cost-sharing since 1998, which altered the apparent dollar amount of the U.S. contribution (see Table 3).

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<sup>163</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>164</sup> Richard B. Cheney, *Defense Strategy for the 1990s: The Regional Defense Strategy* (Washington, DC; Department of Defense, 1993), 22.

<sup>165</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, "Defense Cost-sharing," [http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?command=view&page=1&boardId=O\\_50760&boardSeq=O\\_50783&titleId=null&id=mnd\\_010602030000](http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?command=view&page=1&boardId=O_50760&boardSeq=O_50783&titleId=null&id=mnd_010602030000).

Table 3. Defense cost-sharing<sup>166</sup>

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
USD (million)	\$150	\$180	\$220	\$260	\$300	\$330	\$363	\$135
KRW (10 million)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,45

The U.S. believed that considering South Korea's strong economy, its requirement was quite reasonable. Compared to South Korea's annual GDP growth, the increase of defense cost-sharing was low. In the 1990s, South Korea's average annual GDP growth was about 7%, but its defense cost-sharing increased with 1.1% every year.<sup>167</sup> In addition, given the total cost of stationing the USFK was over \$2 billion annually,<sup>168</sup> South Korea's contributions to the USFK were still small: 8% in 1991 and 18% in 1998. As Mark E. Manyin stated, the objective of the Pentagon was to increase South Korea's share to at least 50%.<sup>169</sup> However, South Korea disagreed with the U.S.'s definition of the term, "appropriate."<sup>170</sup> It considered that the U.S.'s demands for defense cost-sharing exceeded the ROK's economic power. While its contributions to the USFK increased nearly 300%, the ROK's total defense budget increased only about 100% from 1991 to 1999.<sup>171</sup> Compared to the ROK defense budget's rate of increase, its increasing rate of contribution was too high.

In sum, in the 1990s, South Korea began to take economic profits into account when it decided to purchase foreign arms. South Korea did not buy only U.S. arms for

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<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> The World Bank, "Data: South Korea," <http://databank.worldbank.org/data/views/reports/tableview.aspx>, "Defense Cost-sharing," The ROK Ministry of National Defense.

<sup>168</sup> Larry A. Niksch, *Korea: US-Korean Relations-Issues for Congress* (Washington DC: Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress, 2005), 12.

<sup>169</sup> Mark E. Manyin, *U.S. - South Korea Relations* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2010), 15, <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41481.pdf>.

<sup>170</sup> Kwak, "Alliance Institutionalization," 237

<sup>171</sup> Ibid.; The ROK Ministry of National Defense, "Defense budget," [http://www.mnd.go.kr/mbshome/mbs/mnd/subview.jsp?id=mnd\\_010201020000](http://www.mnd.go.kr/mbshome/mbs/mnd/subview.jsp?id=mnd_010201020000).

interoperability. Since the two countries had different opinions on defense cost-sharing, intra-alliance tension took place. As a result, alliance cohesion became weak.

### **C. CONCLUSION**

U.S. foreign policy greatly shifted in the early 1990s, because the two Germanies achieved unification in 1989, and the Soviet Union collapsed. After the end of the Cold War, no nation could balance the U.S.'s economic and military power. Although the U.S. had enjoyed its superior status in its foreign relationships, the U.S. government faced opposition in domestic environment. The U.S. Congress and the public urged its government to reduce its foreign interventions and commitment. The U.S. President, George H.W. Bush, declared the new foreign policy and planned to withdraw its military in East Asia to concentrate on domestic matters.

As the U.S. did not have a clear and grave threat, the U.S-ROK alliance cohesion became weak. The diminished Soviet threat led the U.S. to be less interested in the Korean Peninsula. South Korea became peripheral to the U.S. security interests. The U.S. began to evaluate the costs and risks of its commitment to the ROK, which resulted in weak alliance cohesion.

The U.S. leading officials issued new foreign policies. Above all, the Nunn-Warner Amendment and the EASI indicated that the U.S. less committed to South Korea. In addition, the two countries' presidents had different perspectives on North Korea. While the U.S. preferred hard-liner approaches, the ROK emphasized inter-Korea cooperation through the Sunshine Policy. Thus, intra-alliance tension took place, which weakened alliance cohesion.

With respect to the second indicator, combined exercises and operations, the U.S. transferred responsibility to South Korea. The ROK JCS led planning, executing and reviewing of exercises. This meant that operations and exercises were being separately controlled, because the CFC had responsibility for operations. The U.S. focused on exercising deployment of the U.S. armed forces in the mainland. Above all, the two nations agreed to halt Team Spirit exercises. Since the aim of this exercise was to prepare

for Pyeongyang's war provocations, the two countries lost opportunities to improve their combined armed forces' proficiency for war.

The third indicator, alliance institutionalization, became the weakest of the four indicators. Although North Korea escalated tension in the Korean peninsula by executing many provocations, the U.S. agreed to transfer its peacetime OPCON to the ROK. The U.S. did not need to engage in South Korea's security issues during peace time. The transfer of peacetime OPCON removed an important alliance institution. Therefore, with the third indicator, alliance cohesion became greatly weakened.

Regarding the fourth indicator, combined military capabilities, South Korea diversified its arms sources. Seoul was a still major purchaser for U.S. arms, but its effort to decrease the extent of U.S. dependency was significant. In addition, the two nations negotiated their defense cost-sharing. Since neither country was satisfied about their proportions of defense cost-sharing, the two countries created intra-alliance tension. Thus, alliance cohesion became weak.

In the 1990, these four indicators reflected the U.S.'s low commitment to the defense of the Korean Peninsula. The major security threats of the U.S. were domestic problem in the 1990s Thus, during this period, alliance cohesion was weak. The main driver, leading the two countries to weaken alliance cohesion, was change in dominant U.S. threat perception of the collapse of the Soviet Union.

## V. GLOBAL TERRORISM THE FIRST DECADE OF THE 2000S

### A. THE U.S. DOMINANT SECURITY OUTLOOK

September 11, 2001, became a significant turning point in all U.S. policies. Nineteen terrorists, who were connected to the Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda, executed suicide attacks against the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon by hijacking four flights. While the U.S. was not threatened by external forces in the 1990s, it had a clear security threat again in the first decade of the 2000s. To respond to this disastrous crisis, The U.S. President declared the policy of "War on Terrorism."<sup>172</sup>

#### 1. Major Driving Events

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, the U.S. had enjoyed its superpower status. No one could balance the U.S. military and economic power. However, on the morning of September 11, 2001, the U.S. security environment was drastically changed. The day was recorded as the deadliest in the U.S. history. Nineteen terrorists, who were connected to the Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda, executed suicide attacks against the twin towers of New York's World Trade Center and the Pentagon by hijacking four flights.<sup>173</sup> Two major sites were destroyed, and thousands of people died or were severely injured. The September 11 attack was a challenge to U.S. superiority, because the two targets represented the U.S.'s economic and military strength.<sup>174</sup> Almost 3,000 people were killed, and many buildings in Lower Manhattan were destroyed. Considering that diverse infrastructures were destructed, the extent of damage was larger. Jason Bram calculated the total cost of the September 11 attack as \$33 billion to \$36 billion.<sup>175</sup> This attack aggravated the U.S. economy, which was already trapped in a serious recession. The

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<sup>172</sup> Jentelson, *American Foreign Policy*, 406.

<sup>173</sup> "9/11 ATTACKS," History.com, <http://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks>.

<sup>174</sup> Roxanna Harlow and Lauren Dundes, "United we Stand: Responses to the September 11 Attacks in Black and White," *Sociological Perspectives* 47, no. 4 (Winter, 2004): 339.

<sup>175</sup> Jason Bram, James Orr and Carol Rapaport, *Measuring the Effects of the September 11 Attack on New York City* (Washington DC: National Emergency Training Center, 2002), 5.

inter-American Development Bank (IADB) decreased the estimated U.S. economic growth from about four percent to one percent.<sup>176</sup> Criminals in the attack were Islamic terrorists from Arab countries. They were associated with Saudi fugitive Osama bin Laden's al-Qaeda terrorist group. By supporting and leading this attack, al-Qaeda demonstrated its intention to oppose the U.S. intervention in the Middle East's issues. The terror was designed to retaliate against the U.S.'s support for Israel and the U.S. military presence in the Middle East.<sup>177</sup>

The end of the Cold War led the U.S. to become a superpower without a rival, and the U.S. enjoyed its superior status in the 1990s. However, the September 11 attack seriously threatened U.S. prosperity and security. Since 9/11 was the first foreign attack on the American Homeland in 60 years, the attack shocked the U.S. and the world.

## **2. U.S. Perception and Response**

The September 11 attacks fundamentally changed U.S. foreign policy. As the U.S. mainland was directly attacked, the Bush administration transformed its primary signature from economic and environmental issues to traditional security matters. The U.S. reinforced its security departments again to deal with terrorism, and the vital interested region was shifted from East Asia to Middle East to cope with its security threat. President Bush described this attack as "the Pearl Harbor of the 21st century."<sup>178</sup> One day after the attack, he declared war on terrorism, by stating, "we will not end until every terrorist group of global reach has been found, stopped, and defeated."<sup>179</sup> Before September 11, 2001, the U.S. could not prioritize many foreign policy agendas, such as controlling immigration and stopping illicit trafficking in drugs. However, the war on terrorism became the top priority in foreign policy surpassing all agendas. The Bush administration announced that the U.S. would attack Afghanistan to kill Osama bin

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<sup>176</sup> Christopher Mitchell, "The Significance of the September 11, 2001 Terrorist Attacks for United States-Bound Migration in the Western Hemisphere," *International Migration Review* 36, no. 1 (Spring, 2002), 29.

<sup>177</sup> "9/11 ATTACKS," History.com.

<sup>178</sup> Nye, "Future of American Power," 1.

<sup>179</sup> Jentelson, *American Foreign Policy*, 406.

Laden, disband his al-Qaeda terrorist group, and remove the Taliban regime that supported bin Laden. After the Afghanistan War, President Bush declared the “Bush doctrine,” which emphasized preemptive military operations. The security agencies such as the NSC and DOD had legitimacy to project its armed forces abroad, and their budget greatly increased. With the Bush doctrine, Washington decided to start the Iraq War to topple the Hussein regime. The Bush administration believed that disarmament of Iraq could contribute to terminating the root of terrorist networks and protecting the world from serious danger.

The public and Congress backed up the Bush government. The U.S. citizens agreed that the U.S. played an active role in protecting its security and peace. They perceived international terrorist groups as its number-one security threat.<sup>180</sup> The public provided strong support for a military approach to handle terrorism. It also endorsed the increase of security budgets. Congress unusually announced bipartisan support to the government. Although policy makers had different ideological preferences on foreign policy, the events of September 11 made patriotism dominate them. As Congress passed Senate Joint Resolution 23, the President had a legal authority to freely conduct military operations against terrorist organizations including nations.<sup>181</sup> Specifically, Congress demonstrated its bipartisan support to President by approving the Iraq War with overwhelming margins.

As for the U.S., the world’s only superpower, all regions of the world had their own distinctive importance. After September 11 attacks, the Middle East became the pivotal region. Under the “ABT (anybody but terrorists) principle,”<sup>182</sup> the Bush administration carried out military interventions in Afghanistan and Iraq to destroy all terrorist groups including al-Qaeda. In the first decade of the 2000s, the U.S. security threat was in the Middle East not in the Pacific-East Asia region.<sup>183</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> Nye, “Future of American Power,” 15.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Jentelson, *American Foreign Policy*, 406.

<sup>183</sup> Ibid.

The changed dominant threat perception negatively influenced the security relationship between the U.S. and the ROK. Since the U.S. mainly found its targets in the Middle East countries such as Iraq, the Middle East became the U.S.'s the most vital region. On the other hand, regions other than the Middle East were less important for Washington.

## **B. THE COHESION OF THE ALLIANCE**

The September 11 attacks led to drastic changes in the U.S.-ROK alliance. Since the U.S.'s most vital region was decided as the Middle East, Washington was less interested in East Asia issues including the Korean Peninsula. Additionally, as terrorism became the most significant threat to the U.S., the most important mission of the USFK was changed from protecting South Korea to dealing with terrorism in the Asia-Pacific region more broadly. The four indicators demonstrated that the shift in dominant U.S. threat perception influenced the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance.

### **1. Official Statements and Documents by Leaders**

The September 11 attacks of 2001 brought remarkable changes in the U.S.-ROK alliance.<sup>184</sup> President George W. Bush redefined its alliances to handle terrorism crises throughout the world. The U.S. DOD significantly changed the U.S.'s military strategy to wipe out international terrorist organizations and prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.<sup>185</sup> In 2004, Washington announced its new grand strategy, the Global Posture Review (GPR). The GPR concentrated on stepping up U.S. strategic flexibility in order to cope with worldwide issues. It readjusted military structures of oversea-based forces. To respond to global adversaries' unexpected security threats, the U.S. armed forces should not be fixed in specific area, but maintain high flexibility to rapidly project their military troops: "rather than fixating massive forces overseas, the U.S. focuses on expanding rapid force projection."<sup>186</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Kevin Shepard, "Counterterrorism," in *The U.S.-South Korea Alliance*, ed. Scott Snyder (Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2011): 43.

<sup>185</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *2001 Quadrennial Defense Review* (Washington DC: Department of Defense, 2001), 11-16, <http://www.defense.gov/pubs/qdr2001.pdf>.

<sup>186</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper*, 337.

As the additional missions and duties were assigned to the USFK, it no longer focused only on defending the ROK. Following the GPR, the USFK was realigned to address a wider range of security problems, such as global terrorism, and maintained flexibility. Although the USFK played a symbolic role in reinforcing combined defense posture and improving the South Korea's armed forces, it would be ready to project its forces out of South Korea. In addition, Washington designed the USFK reduction again to concentrate its military forces on the Iraq War. At the 36th SCM, U.S. Secretary of Defense declared the withdrawal of 12,500 U.S. troops in three stages by 2008 to detach some 2nd Division troops to Iraq.<sup>187</sup> The USFK's changes in its structure, mission, and the number would demonstrate Washington's low commitment to the U.S.-ROK alliance, which weakened the combined defense posture in South Korea. The USFK's pursuit of flexibility resulted in weak alliance cohesion.

The terrorist attacks also challenged the foundation of the U.S.-ROK alliance in political sectors. The two nations had different perspectives on their foreign policies to North Korea.<sup>188</sup> President Bush described North Korean as the member of Axis of Evil and perceived it as a possible threat. On the other hand, South Korean Presidents Kim Dae-jung and Roh Moo-hyun regarded North Koreans as the same Korean race rather than a main enemy; "Many in the South saw the North Korean as less of a threat and more of a needy neighbor."<sup>189</sup> President Kim declared the Sunshine policy that stressed "unilateral aid and political concession."<sup>190</sup> The South Korean government offered a large amount of fertilizer, food, and money. Seoul provided \$3 billion for Pyeongyang through the Sunshine policy, which exceeded China's foreign aid, \$1.9 billion.<sup>191</sup> Since the U.S. and ROK's foreign policies became divergent, intra-alliance tension was again elevated. Therefore, with respect to the first indicator, alliance cohesion was still weak.

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<sup>187</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, "the 36th SCM Joint Communiqué," [http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I\\_43915&page=2&id=mnd\\_010604000000](http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I_43915&page=2&id=mnd_010604000000).

<sup>188</sup> Shepard, "Counterterrorism," 43.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Andrei Lankov, *The Real North Korea: Life and Politics in the Failed Stalinist Utopia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 163.

<sup>191</sup> Victor Cha, *The Impossible State: North Korea, Past and Future* (New York: Random House, 2012), 388.

## 2. Combined Exercises and Operations

In 2002, the number of a comprehensive U.S.-ROK combined exercise decreased from three to two. The RSOI exercise was carried out in alignment with the F/E. In 2008, the two combined exercises fundamentally changed, relating to discussion for the transfer of wartime OPCON. The title of the UFL exercise was altered to Ulchi Freedom Guardian (UFG), and the name of the RSOI/FE was changed to Key Resolve / Foal Eagle (KR/FE).

The UFL became an integrated exercise including both the military and the government. Since the late 1990s, South Korea had led the UFL. In 2008, the ROK JCS officially planned, executed, and reviewed this exercise, and the USFK just supported South Korea armed forces. Reflecting both armed forces' changed roles, the title of this exercise changed from the UFL to the UFG. The purpose of the UFG was different from that of the UFL. The UFL focused on the mastery of the Operations Plan 5027 (OPLAN 5027) for the defense against a North Korean invasion.<sup>192</sup> On the other hand, The UFG concentrated on improving operational capacity of ROK JCS and U.S. KORCOM.<sup>193</sup> Although North Korea escalated tension on the Korean Peninsula as well as in the East Asia by a nuclear test, the U.S. and South Korea emphasized the transfer of wartime OPCON, not preparation for Pyongyang's imminent threats.

In 2002, the RSOI and the F/E were integrated. Since the purpose of each exercise was largely different, the effect of integration was not great. While the RSOI focused on deployment of the U.S. augmented troops, the F/E was a comprehensive field training exercise including special operations.<sup>194</sup> Despite this difference in purposes, the U.S. and the ROK agreed to decrease combined exercises. In 2008, the RSOI/FE's name changed to the KR/FE. The background and the purpose of this change were the same as the UFG's name change, specifically to prepare the transfer of wartime OPCON. The ROK JCS definitely led combined exercises, and the USFK's role was confined. Furthermore,

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<sup>192</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, 2006 *Defense White Paper* (Seoul: ROK Ministry of National Defense Press, 2006), 262.

<sup>193</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, 2008 *Defense White Paper*, 362.

<sup>194</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, 2000 *Defense White Paper*, 70-1.

the KR/FE's purpose was clearly different from the RSOI/FE. The two armed forces no longer exercised rear-area operations with combined Special Forces although the initial purpose of the F/E was to improve special operations. According to *the 2010 ROK Defense White Paper*, the two purposes of the KR/FE were “to gain proficiency in OPLAN procedures and to guarantee deployment of U.S. Augmentation Forces.”<sup>195</sup> Considering that the number of North Korea’s Special Forces was approximately 200,000,<sup>196</sup> the weak combined capabilities in the rear-area would threaten the security of South Korea.

In the first decade of the 2000s, combined exercises became weaker in terms of number and contents. The RSOI and the F/E were integrated in one exercise. The two nations changed the title of the UFL to UFG and the RSOI/FE to KR/FE to show the decreased role of the USFK. The two nations also changed the exercises’ purposes from defending South Korea from an imminent North Korea’s threat to preparing for the transfer of wartime OPCON. In addition, as discussed in Chapter IV, the ROK JCS’s leading role in these two comprehensive exercises damaged the effectiveness of exercises. Therefore, alliance cohesion was still weak.

### **3. The Institutionalization of the Alliance**

In the first decade of 2000s, the U.S. and South Korea agreed to the transfer of wartime OPCON and the ensuing abolition of the CFC. The disestablishment of the CFC would result in weak combined defense posture. Seong-whun Cheon described the CFC command structure as “the most effective command system.”<sup>197</sup> Since this structure’s main characteristic was the “unity in command” system, the level of both armed forces’ integration was quite high. However, after disbanding the CFC, the two countries would control their own armed forces respectively without a united commanding structure. The most critical alliance institution, the CFC, would be eliminated.

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<sup>195</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2010 Defense White Paper*, 362.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

<sup>197</sup> Seong-whun Cheon, “The significance of Forming a ROK-US Extended Deterrence Policy Committee,” *Online Series Co 10-39* (Korea institution National Unification: Seoul, 2010): 6.

Both the U.S. and South Korea had more significant national interests than the alliance. Washington was less interested in the Korean peninsula than in the Middle East region. By transferring wartime OPCON to South Korea, Washington could reduce its commitments to South Korea and concentrate on issues in the Middle East, such as terrorism. South Koreans desired an achievement of self-reliance. South Korea intended to obtain a strong and independent military status, because of its developed economy. Since Seoul regarded the transfer from the CFC to the ROK JCS as a symbol of self-reliance, it repeatedly expressed its intentions in 2000–2008. Although the two nations had different national interests, they shared the same objective—the transfer of wartime OPCON and the ensuing disestablishment of the CFC. As a result, Washington and Seoul cooperatively and in full consultation agreed to a change that would damage the U.S.-ROK alliance.

On October 19, 2006, U.S. Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld and ROK Defense Minister Yoon Kwang Ung held the 38th SCM. U.S. Secretary Rumsfeld and ROK Minister Yoon reviewed the progress of wartime OPCON and confirmed the date of the transfer. Both signed *the Roadmap for the New Alliance Military Structure in the Post-OPCON Transition Era*. According this document, “The two countries will complete the wartime OPCON transition to the ROK forces after October 15, 2009, but no later than March 15, 2012.”<sup>198</sup> Their agreement clearly demonstrated weak alliance cohesion. Just ten days before, South Korea’s critical threat, North Korea, escalated tensions beyond the Korean Peninsula, affecting the entire region. On October 9, Pyongyang conducted a nuclear test, which threatened all of East Asia. Although the Secretary and the Minister strongly condemned North Korea’s nuclear test, they reached an agreement that the CFC would be disestablished, and U.S. Korea Command would be activated. Considering that the CFC had been a pivotal institution in defending South Korea, the disestablishment of the CFC would damage the U.S.-ROK alliance in the aspect of a command structure. Therefore, with respect to the third indicator, alliance cohesion was still weak in the first decade of the 2000s.

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<sup>198</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2010 Defense White Paper*, 82.

#### 4. Combined Military Capability

South Korea's effort to diversify its arms' resources had continued in the first decade of the 2000s. Specifically, the effort culminated in the Fighter eXperiment project (F-X). South Korea considered non-U.S. air fighters and compared them to the U.S.'s aircraft, the F-15K. Additionally, the issue of the ROK's missile restriction caused intra-alliance tension. South Korea required the U.S. to increase the ROK's missile range, but the U.S. hesitated to accept Seoul's demands.

Although South Korea was a major buyer of U.S. arms, it increased purchasing of non-U.S. weapons. U.S. arms no longer were the top priority when the ROK MND decided on its weapon system. In 2000, Seoul negotiated arms purchasing with Israel. Since Israel provided cheap prices and the transfer of relating technology, Seoul bought 100 Harpy Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and reviewed purchasing of Israeli defense missiles for its naval destroyer program.<sup>199</sup> For South Korea's first military satellite, French played a key role in supplying related technologies and components. Furthermore, in SAM-X air defense the ROK MND preferred Israeli and France weapon systems to the U.S. patriot missiles. U.S. missiles were expensive, and the U.S. offered strict conditions on the transfer of technologies.

From 1998 to 2002, South Korea conducted the F-X project for its next generation fighter; the total budget reached \$450 billion.<sup>200</sup> In the previous F-X project, only U.S. avionic companies, General Dynamic with F-16 and McDonnell Douglas with F/A-18, were reviewed by the ROK MND. In this F-X project, the ROK considered Rafale of France, EF-2000 of Europe, Su-35 of Russia, and the American F-15K. Russia offered the transfer of avionic technologies and full servicing.<sup>201</sup> The French Rafale obtained the highest score in the F-X committee's evaluation.<sup>202</sup> Despite competitive alternatives, the ROK selected the F-15K as its next generation fighter. South Korean media and civic groups strongly criticized the MND, because "selection was made under pressure from

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<sup>199</sup> Cha, "Strategic Culture and Military Modernization of South Korea," 109.

<sup>200</sup> Hyoung-ro Yoon, "A Study on Decision-Making Processes of the Acquisition of Weapon System," (PhD dissertation, The Graduate School of Yonsei University, 2008): 60.

<sup>201</sup> Cha, "Strategic Culture and Military Modernization of South Korea," 110.

<sup>202</sup> Yoon, "Acquisition of Weapon System," 76.

the Bush administration.”<sup>203</sup> U.S. Senator Christopher Samuel Bond visited Seoul with senators and Boeing’s vice president. They met ROK President Kim Young-sam and the ROK Defense Minister to stress the superiority of U.S. air fighters.<sup>204</sup> The South Korea’s consideration of alternatives implied that pursuit for interoperability with the U.S. was not the only major determinant in the ROK’s decision.

The U.S. and ROK had different perspectives on revising the ROK’s missile restriction. The 1979 agreement between the U.S. and the ROK confined South Korean missile ranges to 180 km. After North Korea showed its advanced missile technology in a Taepo-dong flight test, Seoul worried about security. The ROK required the U.S. to revise the 1979 agreement in order to deter North Korea. The U.S. agreed to extend the missile ranges from 180km to 300km, but asked for South Korea to receive the U.S.’s inspection on future developments.<sup>205</sup> Seoul was quite dissatisfied with Washington’s response.

In sum, South Korea still sought to diversify its arms supplies; pragmatism, such as price or transfer of technology, was more emphasized than before. Moreover, the U.S. and South Korea had different views on the revision of the ROK’s missile restriction, which caused intra-alliance tension. Therefore, alliance cohesion was still weak in the first decade of the 2000s.

### C. CONCLUSION

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, no nation could match the U.S.’s economic and military power. However, the year of 2001 became a pivotal turning point in U.S. foreign policy. Terrorists attacked the U.S. mainland by hijacking airplanes. U.S. citizens raged against this attack and required the government to deal with the crisis using all means including military operations. As a result, President George W. Bush declared “the War on terrorism” and started the Afghanistan War and Iraq War. The U.S.’s security threat was located not in the Asia-Pacific region but in the Middle East.

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<sup>203</sup> Niksch, *Korea: U.S.-Korean Relations-Issues for Congress*, 12

<sup>204</sup> Yoon, “Acquisition of Weapon System,” 74.

<sup>205</sup> Cha, “Strategic Culture and Military Modernization of South Korea,” 11.

The September 11 attack weakened the U.S.-ROK alliance, because the U.S. security threat was changed to Middle East countries related to terrorism.<sup>206</sup> Since South Korea was geographically far from the Middle East, the U.S. was less interested in the Korean Peninsula. South Korea became peripheral to the U.S. security interests. The U.S. began to evaluate the costs and benefits of its commitment to the ROK, which resulted in weak alliance cohesion.

Regarding the first indicator, the U.S. leading officials issued new foreign policies such as the Global Posture Review (GPR). Following the changes of U.S. military strategies, the USFK had to be ready to project its forces beyond the Korean peninsula. This meant the decrease of the U.S.'s commitments to South Korea. In addition, the two nations had different perspective on foreign policy toward North Korea. While the U.S. condemned North Korea with Middle East countries, South Korea did not perceive North Korea as its major enemy. Their opposing foreign policies resulted in intra-alliance tension. Therefore, alliance cohesion was still weak.

With respect to the second indicator, combined exercises and operations, the U.S. reduced its responsibility and duties. The two nations agreed to decrease three comprehensive exercises to two exercises. They also changed the two exercises' titles, which indicated that purposes of the exercises were to prepare for the transfer of wartime OPCON. Although North Korea threatened stability in East Asia, the U.S. and the ROK focused on preparing for the transfer, not on deterring North Korea. The dualistic commanding structure, exercises led by the ROK and the U.S.-led operations, greatly weakened the effectiveness of the combined defense posture. Thus, alliance cohesion was weak.

The third indicator, alliance institutionalization, became the weakest of the four indicators. The two nations began to discuss the transition of wartime OPCON and the subsequent disestablishment of the CFC. The CFC acted as a symbol of the firm combined defense posture and guaranteed effective combined operations. To disband the CFC would damage the interoperability of the two countries' armed forces. Although

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<sup>206</sup> Shepard, "Counterterrorism," 44

North Korea escalated tension in the Korean peninsula by executing nuclear tests, the two countries confirmed that their plan for the transfer of wartime OPCON had not changed. The transfer of wartime OPCON would remove the most important alliance institution, which resulted in weak alliance cohesion.

Regarding the fourth indicator, combined military capabilities, South Korea continued to diversify its arms suppliers. In major arms contracts, Seoul reviewed non-U.S. weaponry and purchased Israeli and French weapons. The ROK's F-X project implied that without reasonable price or reciprocal benefits, the ROK MND would not purchase U.S. arms including the F-15K. Pragmatism became as important as interoperability. In addition, the revision of the ROK's missile restriction caused intra-alliance conflict. The ROK required longer missile range, but the U.S. conditionally accepted the ROK's demands, requiring full U.S. inspection on South Korea's future development. As a result, alliance cohesion was still weak.

In the first decade of the 2000s, these four indicators reflected the U.S.'s low commitment to the defense of the Korean Peninsula. The major security threat of the U.S. was terrorism and the Middle Eastern countries that supported terrorist organizations. Thus, during this period, alliance cohesion was still weak. The main driver, leading the two countries to weaken alliance cohesion, was change in dominant U.S. threat perception of global terrorism.

## VI. REBALANCING ASIA IN THE EARLY 2010S

### A. THE U.S. DOMINANT SECURITY OUTLOOK

The U.S. has been the only global superpower for several decades since the Soviet Union collapsed. Yet, as its global rival and peer competitor, China has challenged the U.S. superior status. The rapid developments of China's economy and the annually increased Chinese defense budget have led China to have advanced military capabilities and embark on great power ambitions. To respond to the emergence of powerful China, the U.S. shifted its strategic priorities and changed its vital region from the Middle East to the East Asia. With Washington's heightened attention to China, President Barack Obama declared "Pivot to Asia Policy." The re-engagement to the Asia-pacific region became the diplomatic and strategic top priority to check the expansion of China.

#### 1. Major Driving Events

The People's Republic of China (PRC) has enjoyed unprecedented economic and military development; most experts have described China's rapid development as the rise of China. The PRC is the third-largest country in the world in terms of territorial size and has abundant raw material and manpower. Based on these beneficial conditions, since the early 1980s, China has greatly improved its economic power. With its advanced economy, China has focused on modernizing its military forces that are commensurate with its economy. Since the 1990s, the Chinese People's Liberation Army (PLA) has vigorously promoted the Revolution in Military Affairs (RMA). As a result, China has pursued regional hegemony.<sup>207</sup> However, China's excessive expansions of its influence and recent unilateral actions in the South and East China Sea have unnerved its Asian neighbors, and the United States has strongly voiced concerns over instability in the Asia-Pacific region.

Strong economic power is a driving force in the rise of China. The Chinese economy shows both unprecedented dynamism and unique complexity. Barry Naughton

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<sup>207</sup> Jae-ho Chung, "East Asia Responds to the Rise of China: Patterns and Variations," *Pacific Affairs* 82, no. 4 (2009): 657.

argues, “Since the 1980s, China has consistently been the most rapidly growing economy on earth, sustaining an average annual growth rate of 10% from 1978 to 2005.”<sup>208</sup> Moreover, China has been known as the most populated country in the world: its population reached 1.35 billion people in 2010. Rapid economic growth, abundant raw materials, and sufficient manpower resources have indicated that China would eventually emerge into strong economies. In the 2000s, this expectation became a reality. As China’s gross domestic product (GDP) reached U.S. \$2.225 trillion in 2005, it took over the fourth highest ranking. In 2010, its GDP level raised to the second position catching up with Japan. The GDP of China in 2013 is \$9.240 trillion, which is the second highest following the U.S. \$16.8 trillion. The annual GDP growth is around 9% between 1999 and 2013.<sup>209</sup> In addition, since 2004, China has become the world’s third-largest trading nation, following the U.S. and Germany. The economic emergence of China was the significant characteristic in the world economy in the last quarter of the twentieth century and China’s economic growth would be imperative in the twenty-first century.<sup>210</sup>

Based on its strong economy, the PRC has focused on upgrading its military power. Since the 1990s, it has allocated its large budget on military modernization. China’s ultimate aim in its comprehensive military modernization program is to prevent Taiwan’s independence.<sup>211</sup> In concert with this, the PLA has improved its military strength to win potential conflicts in the Taiwan Strait and to deter third-party intervention. However, the PRC’s objectives extend beyond strengthening control over the current sovereignty and territorial claims. The PLA is focusing on developing their military approaches to deal with various contingencies including Taiwan. As the PRC’s international influence and economic growth have improved, its goal of military

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<sup>208</sup> Barry Naughton, *The Chinese Economy Transitions and Growth* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2006), 1.

<sup>209</sup> World Bank, “China.”

<sup>210</sup> Michael E. Brown, *The Rise of China* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000), 1.

<sup>211</sup> Office of Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People’s Republic of China 2014* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2014), 6, [http://www.defense.gov/pubs/2014\\_DoD\\_China\\_Report.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/pubs/2014_DoD_China_Report.pdf).

modernization has expanded from protecting its coast and domestic sovereignty to maximizing its national interest.<sup>212</sup>

The main characteristics of PLA modernization unequivocally show the PRC's objective: "China's military investments provide it with a growing ability to project power at increasingly longer ranges."<sup>213</sup> China has been emphasizing the Air Force and Navy rather than the Ground force. The main missions of the Ground Force have been limited to border defense and domestic stability. The PLA Air Forces (PLAAF) has imported advanced aircrafts, such as Su-27 and Su-30 fighters, from Russia. The PLAAF also has developed its own avionic technologies: "the test of the next-generation fighter prototype highlights China's ambition to produce [the advanced] fighter aircraft."<sup>214</sup>

In addition to the modernization of its air force, the PLA is also actively expanding space assets to achieve space superiority. The Annual Report to Congress in 2014 argues, "With China emerging as the third space power after the United States and Russia, competition in outer space is becoming overheated between the countries in the region."<sup>215</sup> To increase its ability to use space, China has launched about 40 satellites to date, 22 of which have imaging capabilities sufficient to assist in detecting and tracking a carrier strike group.

The PLA Navy forces (PLAN) have improved many combat ships with modern air defense and missile systems. Beijing has recently given highest priority to the modernization of the PLAN, leading to an extensive upgrade of its equipment that emphasizes Anti-Access/Area Denial (A2/AD) capabilities. It includes the upgrading of the nuclear-powered submarine and an aircraft carrier.

With strong military might and economic capacity, Randy Schriver contends that China has changed its self-perception "from 150 years of shame and humiliation to a

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<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Office of Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress: Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2012* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2012), 24, [http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/2012\\_cmpr\\_final.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/pubs/pdfs/2012_cmpr_final.pdf).

<sup>215</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper*, 16-7.

great power mentality.”<sup>216</sup> Schriver further argues, “China is growing not only in terms of its comprehensive national power, but also in its willingness and ability to promote its interests through the exploitation of that power.”<sup>217</sup> China participates in major international issues and protects its national interests more actively than before. J. Ashley Roach contends that since 2009, China has addressed sovereignty issues such as territorial disputes more firmly: “four of the last five Foreign Ministry Statements have dealt with issues related to China’s claims either in the South China Sea or the Senkakus.”<sup>218</sup> Beijing has pursued the consolidation of territories: Paracel Islands, Spratly Islands, Diaoyu (Senkaku) islands, the South China Sea islands, and Taiwan. With regard to Taiwan, Beijing has declared “the One China Policy.” Since reunification with Taiwan is the highest national objective of China, it has deterred Taiwan’s independence movements by political, economic, and social means. The PRC also firmly asserts military forces will be used to control Taiwan.

Consequently, the PRC has pushed ahead with its military modernization program by constantly increasing its national defense budget. While the rise of China has been applauded by worldwide leaders, many of them, in private, worried about negative impacts that expansion of China’s economic, political, military influence would bring on the region.<sup>219</sup>

## **2. U.S. Perception and Response**

The U.S recognizes the PRC as a potentially strong rival influencing the U.S.-led world order in the long run.<sup>220</sup> China’s economic and military developments have led it to be one of two Superpowers; C. Fred Bergsten explains the meaning of “G-2” as “the

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<sup>216</sup> Randy Schriver, “The U.S.-ROK Alliance: Regional Challenges for an Evolving Alliance,” in *Going Global: The Future of the US-South Korea Alliance* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2009): 38.

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

<sup>218</sup> J. Ashley Roach, “China’s Straight Baseline Claim: Senkaku (Diaoyu) Islands” (Washington DC: American Society of International Law, 2013): 9.

<sup>219</sup> Brown, *Rise of China*. 1.

<sup>220</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership: Priorities for 21st Century Defense* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2012), 2, [http://www.defense.gov/news/defense\\_strategic\\_guidance.pdf](http://www.defense.gov/news/defense_strategic_guidance.pdf).

United States and China are the world's two most important economies.”<sup>221</sup> Within this context, President Barack Obama has emphasized the collaborative relationship with the PRC: “The United States and China are the world's two most important economies, which is designed to preserve and enhance stability in the international system and the Asia-Pacific region.”<sup>222</sup>

Although the U.S. has viewed China as a key partner for its security and prosperity, it also has also recognized China as a worrisome potential foe.<sup>223</sup> According to the Annual Report to Congress 2014, the U.S. concludes that China will bring about instability: “China's expanding interests have led to friction between some of its regional neighbors, including allies and partners of the U.S.”<sup>224</sup> The PRC is focused on winning local, limited wars in its periphery to protect its territories, including Taiwan, in the short term, while pursuing efforts to protect its Sea Line of Communications (SLOCs) and economic interests worldwide in the long term. The 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review asserts that the “lack of transparency and the nature of China's military development and decision-making process raise legitimate questions about its future conduct and intentions within Asia and beyond.”<sup>225</sup> Although China has described itself as a benign and responsible developing country, its emphasis on defending territorial integrity, supported by a strong economy and developed military forces, has resulted in forceful rhetoric and confrontational behaviors in recent years.

Additionally, China's recent unilateral actions in the South and East China Sea have unnerved its Asian neighbors, and the United States has strongly condemned them as destabilizing. Furthermore, the PLA with rapid modernization has created fears of an arms race in the region. Schriver supported this view by arguing that “China's military

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<sup>221</sup> C. Fred Bergsten, “Two's Company,” *Foreign Affairs* 88, no. 5 (2009): 169-70.

<sup>222</sup> Office of Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report: China 2012*, 59.

<sup>223</sup> Kurt M. Campbell, *Going Global: The Future of the US-South Korea Alliance* (Washington, DC: Center for a New American Security, 2009), 4.

<sup>224</sup> Office of Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report: China 2012*, i.

<sup>225</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2010), 60, <http://www.defense.gov/qdr/qdr%20as%20of%2029jan10%201600.pdf>.

modernization program is one of the greatest concerns to the U.S.”<sup>226</sup> To respond to the major threat, the U.S. has paid attention to the PLA’s modernization. If China intends to expand its influence beyond Taiwan, the U.S. would intervene in the program to prevent instability in the East Asia region.<sup>227</sup>

The U.S. has actively focused on Asia. In 2011, when President Barack Obama traveled to Honolulu, Australia, and Indonesia, he unequivocally stated his core message: “America is going to play a leadership role in Asia for decades to come.”<sup>228</sup> In addition, Obama announced the major shift in its foreign policy. The U.S. changed its vital region from the Middle East to Asia.<sup>229</sup> As a result, the Obama administration announced the East Asia foreign policy, known as “Pivot to Asia”; Asia became the top of America’s security priorities, and the U.S. increased its budget related to Asia issues. In Obama’s public speech to the Australian parliament in November 2011, he expressed his objective that “the United States will play a larger and long-term role in shaping this region [the Asia-Pacific] and its future.”<sup>230</sup> The declaration of America’s strategic pivot to Asia clearly sought to generate confidence in America’s future leadership in this region and respect for Washington’s capacity to orchestrate this very impressive diplomatic *tour de force*.<sup>231</sup> In accordance with the newly issued foreign policy, the U.S. Department of Defense issued the new Defense Strategic Guidance in January 2012. After evaluating the current complex strategic environments, it states the key strategy for each region in order to strengthen its global leadership. The main intention of the U.S is to maintain or increase the level of U.S. forces in the Asia-Pacific region. The approach reflected the evaluation that the Asia-Pacific is the top priority region in its global strategy.

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<sup>226</sup> Schriver, *U.S.-ROK Alliance*, 39.

<sup>227</sup> Ibid.

<sup>228</sup> Kenneth Liberthal, “The American Pivot to Asia: Why President Obama’s Turn to the East is Easier Said than Done,” *Foreign Policy*, December 21, 2011, [http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/12/21/the\\_american\\_pivot\\_to\\_asia](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/12/21/the_american_pivot_to_asia).

<sup>229</sup> Ibid.

<sup>230</sup> The White House, “Remarks by President Obama to the Australian Parliament,” <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/11/17/remarks-president-obama-australian-parliament>.

<sup>231</sup> Litherthal, “American Pivot to Asia.”

Although the Obama administration has constantly announced that one specific country is not its policy's target, most experts see the main emphasis of the U.S. policy in Asia as responding to, and perhaps "containing," China's growing influence.<sup>232</sup> Washington increasingly needs to handle uncertainties in the region created by China's growing military capabilities and its maritime territory disputes.<sup>233</sup> Considering that the policy stems from concerns over China, the major aim is undoubtedly to check the expansion of China's influence in the Asia-Pacific.<sup>234</sup> During a four-country tour of Asia on April 2014, Obama cautiously mentioned China in his official speeches in all countries. He resolutely stated that China should not cause instability in the Asia-Pacific.<sup>235</sup> Regarding China's territorial disputes such as Taiwan and the East or South China seas, the U.S. has contended that it has taken never position. However, considering that the U.S. has constantly emphasized peaceful and political resolutions, it has opposed China's foreign policy. If China asserted itself and acted aggressively, it would trigger U.S.-China competition.

As the U.S. perceives China as a potential threat, it reassesses the geographic value of South Korea. This need to reassess is similar to the geopolitical situation in the 1980s during the second Cold War. Considering the geopolitical proximity between the PRC and the ROK, the ROK is a valuable location for military bases of the U.S. to monitor China's behaviors. Specifically, South Korea is able to offer a critical naval tactical advantage for the U.S. Since the ROK is adjacent to the Yellow Sea and the South East China Sea, it becomes a significant naval strategic point to check the PRC. Since China has engaged in diverse maritime territorial disputes and suppresses Taiwan's independence movements, the U.S. naval bases in South Korea are essential for the U.S.

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<sup>232</sup> Tom Donilon, "America is Back in the Pacific and Will Uphold the Rules," *Financial Times* 27 (2011): 8.

<sup>233</sup> Michael D. Swaine, "Chinese Leadership and Elite Responses to the US Pacific Pivot," *China Leadership Monitor* 38 (2012): 38.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> "Pivotal," *The Economist* (May 3RD-9TH, 2014), 34.

## **B. THE COHESION OF THE ALLIANCE**

Watching the rise of China, Washington increasingly perceives China as a potential threat. The changes in dominant U.S. threat perception have led Washington to reevaluate the geographical value of the Korean Peninsula. The four indicators demonstrate that the shift in dominant U.S. threat perception has influenced the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance in this most recent period.

### **1. Official Statements and Documents by Leaders**

In the early 2010s, two countries' presidents have specifically emphasized maintaining and strengthening the U.S.-ROK alliance. Whenever the countries' summit meetings were held, both presidents always stated the importance of the U.S.-ROK alliance. In addition, high ranking officials, including, the U.S. Secretaries of Defense and the ROK Ministers of Defense, have continually stressed the alliance and have discussed appropriate ways to facilitate mutual cooperation. Within the two countries' official documents, many remarks on strengthening the alliance have been written.

Both countries' presidents have stressed the importance of the U.S.-ROK alliance. When South Korean President Lee Myung-bak visited the U.S. in 2011, U.S. President Barack Obama stated that the U.S.-ROK alliance was unbreakable and stronger than it had ever been. ROK President Lee replied, "our alliance that was born of out of the trenches of war will continue to blossom. It will become stronger."<sup>236</sup> As for the ROK, President Park Geun-hye, who is a successor of President Lee, has also pursued a strong U.S.-ROK alliance. In 2013, President Park Geun-hye selected the U.S. as her first official visit nation among many allied nations. The first nation that a president visits during his or her term is symbolically a country's most important ally. Therefore, President Park's visit indicated Seoul's commitment to reinforce the relationship with the U.S. Obama also interpreted her visit as a strong signal for a firm alliance, as he stated at the joint press conference, "I want to thank you for your strong personal commitment to our alliance. I was honored to welcome you to Washington for your first foreign trip as

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<sup>236</sup> The White House, "Remarks by President Obama and President Lee of the Republic of Korea in Arrival Ceremony," <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/10/13/remarks-president-obama-and-president-lee-republic-korea-arrival-ceremon>.

President.”<sup>237</sup> At the Summit meeting, the two presidents discussed diverse options to develop the U.S.-ROK alliance. Reflecting the two presidents’ common interests in the alliance, Obama stated, “we agreed to continue to modernize our alliance, including enhancing the interoperability of our missile defense systems.”<sup>238</sup> Both presidents’ remarks, which have focused on strengthening the alliance, demonstrated strong alliance cohesion.

Obama’s eight-day tour of Asia in April 2014 culminated in showing Washington’s will to strengthen the alliance; Obama visited Japan, South Korea, Malaysia, and the Philippines to restore credibility and reaffirm alliances. Many scholars and experts on East Asia paid attention to South Korea among these four nations. It became the nation that Obama most frequently visited—four time—during his term. Records of his visit to Seoul surpassed that of his predecessors: William J. Clinton and George W. Bush each visited three times.<sup>239</sup> His visit aimed to intensify the alliance. At a joint press conference, President Park said, “[His visit] reflects President Obama’s special interest in Korea and full commitment and confidence to further strengthen the U.S-ROK alliance.”<sup>240</sup> Responding to Park’s official remarks, Obama also stressed the significance of the alliance and reaffirmed U.S. support: “Our alliance remains a linchpin of security in Asia. America’s commitment to the South Korean people will never waver.”<sup>241</sup> During Obama’s trip, the two presidents showed that their common objective was to improve defense capabilities. They jointly visited U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command (CFC). Considering it was the first time ever since the CFC was formed in 1978, the visit indicated the two presidents’ combined commitment to a strong cohesion of the U.S. – ROK alliance. Consequently, in the late 2000s, the summit meetings’ major topics and

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<sup>237</sup> The White House, “Remarks by President Obama and President Park of South Korea in a Joint Press Conference,” <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2013/05/07/remarks-president-obama-and-president-park-south-korea-joint-press-confe>.

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Presidents Travels to South Korea, U.S. Department of State, accessed November 9, 2014, <https://history.state.gov/departmenthistory/travels/president/korea-south>.

<sup>240</sup> The White House, “Press Conference with President Obama and President Park of the Republic of Korea,” <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/04/25/press-conference-president-obama-and-president-park-republic-korea>.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid.

results have reflected the alliance, which demonstrated a resolute will to solidify the alliance.

Not only the presidents but also high ranking officials have specifically stated the significance of the alliance. Based on the agreement of both nations' presidents, "2-plus-2" Talks—the U.S. and ROK Foreign and Defense Ministers' Meeting—were held in Seoul in 2010 and in Washington, DC, in 2012. In two meetings, ministers affirmed that the two nations commonly developed the alliance to respond to a rapidly changing security environment. Former U.S. Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta officially stressed that the Asia-Pacific region was the key driver for the U.S. prosperity and security. Specifically, he described South Korea as one of important allied countries: "A linchpin of our Asia-Pacific security is the U.S. alliance with the Republic of Korea."<sup>242</sup> Consequently, leaders' statements have commonly supported an even stronger alliance.

Official documents issued by the two governments show this intention. Among many documents, the Joint Vision for the US-ROK Alliance has an important implication. To emphasize a close relationship, in June 2009, Washington and Seoul signed this document: "[It] provided the future-oriented blueprint for the development of the alliance."<sup>243</sup> Its aim was to develop a regional alliance to a more comprehensive alliance in order to respond to global threats and global security concerns. In accordance with this, the U.S. Secretary of Defense and ROK minister of Defense signed the guidelines for U.S.-ROK Defense Cooperation at the 42nd SCM in 2010; the guidelines provided the future direction for the two nations' military relationship.<sup>244</sup> The guidelines' main points were to strengthen the combined defense posture on South Korea and expand the military contribution to security in East Asia and Pacific region.<sup>245</sup>

Several U.S. official documents have repeatedly emphasized the alliance. According to *Sustaining U.S. Global Leadership*, the White House's key defense strategy

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<sup>242</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *Sustaining US Global Leadership*, 4.

<sup>243</sup> ROK Ministry of Defense, *2010 Defense White Paper*, 78.

<sup>244</sup> The ROK Ministry of National Defense, "The 42th SCM Joint Communiqué," [http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I\\_43915&page=2&id=mnd\\_010604000000](http://www.mnd.go.kr/user/boardList.action?boardId=I_43915&page=2&id=mnd_010604000000).

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

is to strengthen its network of allies and partners.<sup>246</sup> The U.S. will continue to promote a rules-based international order by building up constructive defense cooperation. When President Obama visited South Korea, the White house clearly announced that the U.S.-ROK alliance was strong stating, “U.S.-ROK alliance is stronger and deeper than ever.”<sup>247</sup> Washington described the alliance as “the linchpin of peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region and an increasingly comprehensive global partnership.”<sup>248</sup> Thus, the major aim of the U.S. was not only to beef up the alliance, but also to broaden it from its main objective of protecting against various North Korean threats to a more comprehensive alliance. For regional and global security, peace, and prosperity, the goal of the U.S. will be to deepen a combined defense posture on the ROK and facilitate cooperation in the military. Therefore, official statements and documents in this period have clearly displayed that the two countries have focused on strengthening the alliance, which has resulted in greater alliance cohesion.

## **2. Combined Exercises and Operations**

Combined exercises and operations have increased. Two large scale exercises have been conducted as previously arranged and the quality of exercise contents and the level of the exercise have been more developed. A great number of units including governmental institutions participated in the exercise. Moreover, seven combined exercises have newly been created.<sup>249</sup> Invigoration of combined exercises demonstrated that during this period, the U.S.-ROK alliance is steadfastly maintained and strengthened.

The two U.S.-ROK combined exercises at a grand scale, *Ulchi Freedom Guardian* (UFG) and *Key Resolve / Foal Eagle* (KR/FE), are still being implemented: “Both the U.S. and the ROK continue to develop interoperability and readiness through the use of

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<sup>246</sup> U.S. Department of Defense. *Sustaining US Global Leadership*, 6.

<sup>247</sup> The White House, “Joint Fact Sheet: The United States-Republic of Korea Alliance,” <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2014/04/25/joint-fact-sheet-united-states-republic-korea-alliance-global-partnershi>.

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> ROK Ministry of Defense, *2010 Defense White Paper*, 413.; ROK Ministry of Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper*, 398.

annual combined exercises such as [UFG] and [KR/FE].”<sup>250</sup> The aim of UFG is to upgrade theater operational command and execution procedure under a current or future combined system. By conducting wartime standard operating procedures (SOP), both the U.S. and the ROK military forces have been able to gain proficiency. UFG includes crisis management procedure exercises, wartime transition procedure exercises, senior leader seminars, and military coordination framework operating exercises. While the goal of UFG focuses on military command post and government exercises, KR/FE’s main point is to raise integration between command post and field units. Its purpose is to exercise theater operation command and execution procedure, to ensure deployment of U.S. augmentation forces on South Korea, and to maintain ROK armed forces’ warfighting sustainability. Considering that more units participate in UFG, and KR/FE to gain proficiency with integration in combined areas, these two exercises have contributed to strengthening alliance cohesion.

Not only are existing exercises being implemented as planned but also several combined exercises have been newly established. According to the ROK Defense White Paper in 2012, the two countries agreed to start new seven exercises in 2009 and 2010.<sup>251</sup> In 2010, the Cobra Gold exercise and the Max Thunder exercise were started. The annual Cobra Gold exercise involved the two countries’ combined amphibious operations. It included tactical maneuvering exercises, maritime airlifts, and stabilization operations. The Max Thunder exercise focuses on the air force. Its purpose was to raise proficiency with realistic attack procedure by choosing virtual targets. It included strike package mid-altitude infiltration training. In 2012, five exercises were newly added; a combined anti-submarine exercise (ASWEX), a combined anti-submarine maritime search training (SHAREM), a peninsula operations readiness exercise (PENORE), the buddy wing, and combined unconventional warfare training (Balance Knife). The aim of ASWEX and SHAREM was to gain integration in the Navy forces’ operations. Finding and tracking the enemy’s submarines, launching torpedoes, and collecting anti-submarine data were involved. PENORE and the Buddy Wing are exercises of the Air Forces. Its main aim

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<sup>250</sup> The White House, “Joint Fact Sheet: United States- Korea Alliance.”

<sup>251</sup> ROK Ministry of Defense, *2012 Defense White Paper*, 398.

was to improve combined operations and acquire new tactics. It included alert air interdiction operations, close air support operations, and counter fire training. The last exercise, Balance Knife, was related to Special Forces. Its key objective was to develop an unconventional warfare doctrine and facilitate cooperation in unconventional warfare operational execution capabilities. The newly added seven exercises show the shared commitment of the U.S. and ROK to intensify the alliance.<sup>252</sup>

The two nations have made an effort to improve proficiency of combined operations by establishing a regular education course. Considering that the security environment in the Asia-Pacific region is getting more complex, the exact understanding of the environment is a key to maintaining peace and prosperity and protecting the Korea peninsula from various external threats. Within this context, in 2013, USFK command and the ROK ministry signed the memorandum of understanding (MOU) on the combined operation curriculum. The course is provided for the two countries' field-grade officers, and its major aim is to enhance the efficiency of the united operation. Strategically and operationally, effective sharing of a combined operation plan provides a competitive advantage over the adversary. It consists of two courses; one is a working level education for majors and lieutenant colonel officers, and the other is advanced level education for full colonel officers. Instructors include USFK officers, professors at the ROK Armed Forces Staff College, and major commanding generals.

Pushing its foreign policy of the pivot to Asia ahead, the U.S. needs to maintain and strengthen its allied countries. U.S allies also have a great interest in expanding their military relationship with the U.S. Kurt Campbell and Brian Andrews argue, "In broadening its defense engagement, the United States is responding to a demand signal from countries in the region seeking greater opportunities to train, exercise and interact with the U.S. military."<sup>253</sup> Within this context, the U.S. and its key allied partner, South Korea, have encouraged combined exercises, which have been a clear example of strong alliance cohesion.

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<sup>252</sup> Ibid.

<sup>253</sup> Kurt Campbell and Brian Andrews, "Explaining the US Pivot to Asia," *Americas* (2013), 8.

### 3. The Institutionalization of the Alliance

The U.S. and ROK have made great strides in the alliance institutionalization. The schedule of the transfer wartime Operational Control (OPCON) from the U.S. to the ROK has been delayed twice in 2010 and 2014. The two countries agreed to establish the Extended Deterrence Policy committee in 2010 (EDPC) to ensure the U.S. commitment to South Korea. The two nations also formed Korea-U.S. Integrated Defense Dialogue (KIDD) in 2011 to increase the effectiveness of the security consultative system.

At the U.S.-ROK Summit meeting on September 16, 2006, U.S. President George W. Bush and ROK President Roh Moo-hyun agreed to transfer wartime OPCON from the U.S. to the ROK. At the 38th Security Consultative Meeting (SCM) on October 20, 2006, the U.S Secretary of Defense and the ROK Minister of Defense reviewed major issues closely related to the transfer of wartime OPCON. Both sides agreed to the timeline of the transition of OPCON to the ROK; expeditiously after October 15, 2009, but not later than March 15, 2012.<sup>254</sup> Finally, both secretaries of defense, on February 23, 2007, confirmed that the transfer date was April 17, 2012. As the two countries' presidents and secretaries of defense consented to the transfer of wartime OPCON, the highest military officers, the Senior United States Military Officer Assigned to Korea (SUSMOAK) and the Chairman of the ROK Joint Chiefs of Staff signed the Strategic Transition Plan (STP) on June 28, 2007. The STP was a concrete guideline for implementing the wartime OPCON transition.

The transition of wartime OPCON meant a weakening of the united defense posture. Since the defense system was led and controlled by the Commander of the CFC, the integration of operations is quite high. However, after completing the transition of wartime OPCON, the U.S.-ROK Combined Forces Command (CFC) will be dismissed. The defense posture of the U.S.-ROK alliance will be transformed from the CFC-led system into defense system in which the ROK JCS will lead.<sup>255</sup> Thus, the transition will

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<sup>254</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, 2006 *Defense White Paper*, 250-3.

<sup>255</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, 2012 *Defense White Paper*, 84.

result in “a degradation of the commitment and confidence in the partnership on both sides,”<sup>256</sup> and inevitably alliance cohesion will be weakened.

However, North Korea’s repeated provocations changed the road map of the transfer of the wartime OPCON. Pyeongyang committed several major military provocations against South Korea, and these provocations caused instability in East Asia beyond the Korean peninsula. Pyongyang executed a nuclear test and a long-range ballistic missile launch in 2009 and the attack on the ROK Ship *Cheonan* in 2010. In response to these provocations, public opinion was widely spread that the transition of wartime OPCON should be readjusted. Strategic evaluation by the military also supported deferring the date of wartime OPCON, because the ROK military did not have the capabilities to operate effectively as its own command by the original proposed year of 2012. The ROK government raised the issue of adjusting the timing of the wartime OPCON transition to the U.S. government and officially asked the U.S. to readjust the timeline. After close consultation between the two countries, at the June 2010 U.S.-ROK Summit, U.S. President Barack Obama and ROK President Lee Myung-bak agreed that the timing of wartime OPCON transition would be postponed from April 17, 2012 to 1 December 2015.<sup>257</sup> In accordance with the presidents’ agreement, the U.S. Defense Secretary and the ROK Defense Minister signed *Strategic Alliance 2015* at the 42nd SCM, which would provide basic principles for wartime OPCON transition. At the second U.S.-ROK foreign and Defense Ministers’ meeting (2+2) held in Washington, DC, on June 14, 2012, the U.S. Secretaries and ROK Ministers reaffirmed that the date of transferring wartime OPCON to the ROK in 2015 was on schedule.

In 2013, the Blue House requested to delay the transition of wartime OPCON again. After North Korea conducted a third nuclear test, the Korean government concluded that its military was not fully prepared. After having several meetings and consultations, Obama officially announced his decision to delay the transfer of wartime OPCON during his Asian tour in 2014. At the press conference in Seoul, President Park stated, “we shared the view that the timing and condition of the OPCON transfer slated

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<sup>256</sup> Campbell, *Going Global: U.S.-South Korea Alliance*, 5.

<sup>257</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, 2012 *Defense White Paper*, 82-8.

for 2015 can be reviewed.”<sup>258</sup> Obama responded, “President Park recommended and I agreed that ... we can reconsider the 2015 timeline for transferring operational control for our alliance. Together we’ll ensure that our alliance remains fully prepared for our mission.”<sup>259</sup> Given that the security environment in the region is getting more complicated and tensions in the Korean peninsula are escalating, Washington and Seoul reconsidered the schedule for the transition of wartime OPCON to the ROK. The leaders of both countries ordered their defense ministers to consult and determine appropriate timing and conditions. According to *The Economist*, the most significant outcome of Obama’s Asia trip was “military in nature,” which refers to the postponement of wartime OPCON.<sup>260</sup>

At the 42nd SCM in 2010, U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates and ROK Minister of Defense Kim Tae-young signed an agreement to establish an Extended Deterrence Policy Committee (EDPC). This committee contributed to reinforcing the U.S.-ROK alliance, because it reinforced the U.S.’s unwavering commitment to this alliance.<sup>261</sup> According to the *2010 Nuclear Posture Review Report*, the Obama administration’s ultimate objective was to make the world safe and peaceful without nuclear missiles.<sup>262</sup> To reach this goal, Washington adopted a new nuclear policy: “Reducing the role of U.S. nuclear weapons in U.S. national security strategy.”<sup>263</sup> Cheon posited, “reducing the role of nuclear weapons will also cause the effectiveness and dependability of extended nuclear deterrence to decline.”<sup>264</sup> The changed U.S. nuclear strategy caused U.S. allies, especially South Koreans, to worry about security. Given that North Korea escalated inter-Korean tension through provocations such as attack against

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<sup>258</sup> White House. “Press Conference with President Obama and Park.”

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> “Pivotal,” *Economist*, 34.

<sup>261</sup> Wade L. Huntley, “Speed Bump on the Road to Global Zero: US Nuclear Reductions and Extended Deterrence in East Asia,” *The Nonproliferation Review* 20:2, (Routledge, London, 2013): 319-20, <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10736700.2013.799945#.VGJPyqPTk3E>.

<sup>262</sup> U.S. Department of Defense, *2010 Nuclear Posture Review Report* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2010), iii, <http://www.defense.gov/npr/docs/2010%20nuclear%20posture%20review%20report.pdf>.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid.

<sup>264</sup> Cheon, “ROK-U.S. Extended Deterrence Policy Committee,” 6.

the ROKS Cheonan, the U.S. security umbrella was important for Seoul to deter Pyongyang. Reflecting the urgent security environment on the Korean Peninsula, the U.S. and South Korea established the EDPC to affirm the U.S. commitment to the U.S.-ROK alliance. The 42th SCM joint communique stated, “Secretary Gates reaffirmed the continued U.S. commitment to provide and strengthen extended deterrence for the ROK, using the full range of military capabilities, to include the U.S. nuclear umbrella, conventional strike, and missile defense capabilities.”<sup>265</sup> The U.S. clearly demonstrated its intentions that although the U.S.’s nuclear deterrence might not apply to all Korean peninsula contingencies anymore, its broader deterrence policy and capabilities would be never weak.

Lastly, a newly established institution is the US-ROK Integrated Defense Dialogue (KIDD). At the 43rd SCM in 2011, the Minister and the Secretary created a new regular consultative mechanism: “The KIDD will be further developed and concurrently, the agendas and contents discussed by the two nations will be expanded to encompass Korea all areas of mutual interests, thereby further deepening and reinforcing bilateral cooperation.”<sup>266</sup> As this dialogue is a policy consultation framework at the senior level, the Deputy Minister for Defense Policy, MND and the Undersecretary for Policy, and the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) co-preserve. Its aim is to discuss and manage various the two nation’s security and alliance issues, including directions for future security cooperation and effective approaches for extended deterrence against North Korea’s WMD.

In sum, in maintaining the combined defense posture and establishing new communications channels, institutionalized alliance cohesion has been strengthened.

#### **4. Combined Military Capability**

The two nations have focused on improving combined military capability. South Korea has spent a large portion of the defense budget on purchasing U.S. military equipment: “as part of its commitment to strengthen Alliance capabilities, the ROK is

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<sup>265</sup> ROK Ministry of Defense, “42th SCM Joint Communique.”

<sup>266</sup> ROK Ministry of National Defense, 2012 *Defense White Paper*, 78.

continuing to procure major intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) and weapons systems [including Global Hawk Unmanned Aerial Vehicle systems].”<sup>267</sup> In compliance with South Korea’s will to enhance combined military capability, the U.S. Congress agreed to upgrade ROK’s status as an arms purchaser. Thus, the ROK military is able to buy U.S. military equipment more easily and quickly. In addition, the U.S. executive branch, in 2012, revised the missile restriction of the ROK. The two nations were able to develop their interoperable ballistic missile defense systems, and South Korea has effectively upgraded its missile forces against the North’s Missile threats.

South Korea has been a chief buyer of U.S. weapon systems: “The country is regularly among the top customers for Foreign Military Sales (FMS).”<sup>268</sup> According to the Congressional Research Service (CRS), the ROK military purchased \$966.9 million worth of U.S. arms in 2010 and \$540 million worth of U.S. arms in 2011. However, the total cost of arms sales is higher when confirmed future major arms contracts are included. For the ROK’s third F-X in 2009 and 2010, ROK defense officials chose the Lockheed Martin F-35 Joint Strike Fighter as its next main fighter aircraft in September 2013. Although the total cost of the F-35 had exceeded the original budget, Korean defense officials concluded that among competing aircrafts, only the F-35 matched their Required Operational Characteristics (ROC) for stealth capability and interoperability. In March 2013, the Defense Security Cooperation Agency (DSCA) informed Congress of a possible FMS to South Korea for F-35 Joint Strike Fighters aircraft and associated services.<sup>269</sup> The date of the first delivery will be 2018, and the estimated total cost, including aircraft and diverse supporting services, was \$10.8 billion, the biggest arms purchase in Korean history.<sup>270</sup>

South Korea has continued to modernize its military and strengthen its combined defense posture by importing U.S. arms. The DSCA announced that the ROK defense

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<sup>267</sup> White House, “Joint Fact Sheet: United States-Republic of Korea.”

<sup>268</sup> Mark E. Manyin, *U.S. - South Korea Relations* (Washington, DC: Congressional Research Service, 2014), 24, <http://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R41481.pdf>.

<sup>269</sup> The Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “News Release: Korea-F-35 Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft,” <http://www.dsca.mil/major-arms-sales/korea-f-35-joint-strike-fighter-aircraft>.

<sup>270</sup> Ibid.

minister decided to purchase AH-64 APACHE Attack Helicopters, AH-1Z COBRA Attack Helicopters, and MH-60R SEAHAWK Multi-Mission Helicopters.<sup>271</sup> On September 2012, it notified Congress of two FMS contracts to the ROK; one was the 36 AH-64D APACHE Longbow Block III Attack Helicopter and related services, and the other was the 36 AH-1Z COBRA Attack Helicopter and associated support. Each of estimated cost is \$3.6 billion and \$2.6 billion.<sup>272</sup> In May 2012, the DSCA reported a possible FMS of MH-60R SEAHAWK Multi-Mission Helicopters to Congress. Its estimated cost was \$1.0 billion.<sup>273</sup> Additionally, the Korean government, in 2014, has a plan to buy U.S. unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs); “the ROK military will buy four RQ-4 “Global Hawk” UAVs at a price of \$845 million in total.”<sup>274</sup> Although European and Israeli defense corporations have competed for an arms sale to the ROK, South Korea has purchased the majority of its arms from the U.S. This exclusivity has contributed to enhance interoperability, which has resulted in strengthening the alliance.

The U.S. executive branch as well as the U.S. legislature has emphasized solidifying the alliance. The U.S Congress “passed legislation that upgraded South Korea’s status as an arms purchaser from a Major Non-NATO Ally to the NATO Plus Three category (P.L. 110-429), which has become NATO Plus Five.”<sup>275</sup> Regarding FMS to the government of Korea, Congress handed over its authority to the U.S. government; “the U.S. executive branch notify Congress of pending arms sales to South Korea, from \$14 million to \$25 million.”<sup>276</sup> While congress has 30 days to veto arms sales for Non-NATO allies, it has only 14 days for NATO Plus Three allies. Therefore, the elevation in

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<sup>271</sup> The Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “News Release: Korea- 36 AH-1Z COBRA Attack Helicopters,” [http://www.dsca.mil/sites/default/files/mas/korea\\_12-26\\_0.pdf](http://www.dsca.mil/sites/default/files/mas/korea_12-26_0.pdf); The Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “New Release: MH-60R SEAHAWK Multi-Mission Helicopters,” [http://www.dsca.mil/sites/default/files/mas/korea\\_12-21\\_0.pdf](http://www.dsca.mil/sites/default/files/mas/korea_12-21_0.pdf); The Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “New Release: ROK- AH-64D APACHE Attack Helicopters,” [http://www.dsca.mil/sites/default/files/mas/korea\\_12-32\\_0.pdf](http://www.dsca.mil/sites/default/files/mas/korea_12-32_0.pdf).

<sup>272</sup> The Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “News: Korea COBRA Helicopters.”

<sup>273</sup> The Defense Security Cooperation Agency, “News: SEAHAWK Helicopters”

<sup>274</sup> Manyin, *U.S.-South Korea Relations*, 20.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

South Korea's status meant that the ROK could purchase U.S. arms more easily and quickly.

In October 2012, the U.S. agreement to revise South Korean Ballistic Missile Guidelines was important in the cohesion of the alliance. The U.S. DOD allowed South Korea to improve its missile forces. The ROK could extend “the maximum range of [Korea’s] ballistic from 300 km (186 miles) to 800 km (500 miles) and increase the payload limit from 500 kg (1,100 lbs.) to 1,000 kg (2,200 lbs.)”<sup>277</sup> North Korea fired artillery shells and rockets at Yeonpyeong Island in 2010. To respond to conventional military attacks of North Korea effectively, the Lee administration officially demanded the negotiation of the restriction of ballistic Missile Guidelines. Having reviewed the Koreans’ proposal for two years, the U.S., in the end, agreed to the Korean government’s demands. Two governments described the revision as upgrading deterrence against the North’s provocations. The U.S. accepted Korea’s demands in spite of possible damage to its reputation related to restrict nations’ missile development. The priority of the U.S. was to strength the alliance, which resulted in strong alliance cohesion.

### **C. CONCLUSION**

The U.S. has pursued a new military strategy in order to meet the demands of a changing strategic environment, characterized by the increase in China’s influence and Asia’s importance. China’s strong economic power and military strength has led the PRC to become a regional power for the short term and a worldwide superpower similar to the U.S. in the long term. In 2011, the Obama administration issued a foreign policy that concentrated on the Asia-Pacific region. To comply with this foreign policy, Washington’s first priority has been to intensify its security relationships with its allies. Its alliances have been the firm basis of engagement in the Asia-Pacific region and have played key roles in sustaining stability and security: “in partnership with its allies, the U.S. strives to create a stable security order that builds strategic confidence within the region and provides the context for states to build closer ties with each other.”<sup>278</sup> South

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<sup>277</sup> Ibid.

<sup>278</sup> Campbell, “Explaining U.S. Pivot to Asia,” 3-4.

Korea is a key partner of the U.S. to check the rise of China. Schriver argues that the U.S. can benefit from ROK's support in coping with the rise of China; "South Korea's role as a neighbor to China and a host of the U.S. military makes it a key factor in the dynamics of U.S.-Chinese security relations."<sup>279</sup> Within this context, the cohesion of U.S.-Korea alliance has been reinforced in the late 2000s.

Both nations' leading officials have officially described the U.S.-ROK alliance as a linchpin. Above all, the two countries' presidents have continually stated the importance of the alliance in their official remarks. Military documents, such as Defense White Papers and the Strategic Guidelines, have clearly showed their resolve to strengthen the alliance.

Regarding combined exercises and operations, seven exercises have newly been added. Reflecting the current security environments—unconventional attacks, and air and Naval provocations—these exercises have been established for Air Forces, Navy Forces, and Special Forces. Two existing comprehensive exercises, *Ulchi Freedom Guardian* (UFG) and Key Resolve/Foal Eagle (KR/FE), have been developed in its quality of contents and its sizes.

Alliance institutionalization is the most distinguished of the four indicators. The date of the transfer of wartime OPCON has been delayed twice. Completing the transfer of wartime OPCON according to the existing timeline would greatly weaken the combined defense posture. The U.S. intended to reduce its political and economic burden. However, the instability caused by the rise of China has forced the U.S. to focus on the Asia-Pacific region again. Therefore, the U.S. agreed to readjust the date to respond to this instability. As the CFC system will have been maintained for a while, alliance cohesion will have been intensified. By establishing the EDPC, the U.S. reaffirmed its unswerving commitments to South Korea. South Korean greatly reduced its worry about the U.S.'s security umbrella. In addition, the two nations have also made an extra consultative mechanism, which has contributed to strengthening alliance cohesion.

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<sup>279</sup> Schriver, *U.S.-ROK Alliance*, 40-1.

The U.S and ROK have modernized combined military capacities. The ROK has been a major purchaser of U.S. arms. The ROK military decided on the F-35 as its next generation air fighter, instead of other nations' aircraft; the F-X project's cost was almost \$ 11 billion. As the U.S. also elevated the purchasing status of the ROK, the ROK military was able to buy the U.S. arms more conveniently. FMS has contributed to goals of the U.S. foreign policy by meeting defense demands of allied countries. Therefore, this upgrading of ROK's status has meant that the ROK has become a more important partner of the U.S. in Asia-Pacific region: "it is vital to the U.S. national interest to assist our Korean ally in developing and maintaining a strong and ready self-defense capability."<sup>280</sup> The U.S. also acceded to ROK's demands on revision of ballistic missile guidelines although it received serious criticism from other countries. These common efforts to improve their combined capabilities have showed strong alliance cohesion.

In 2009 and 2010, these four indicators reflected the U.S. and ROK's shared commitment to the defense of the Korean Peninsula. These two nations have transformed the U.S.-ROK alliance from protecting South Korea to serving as the linchpin of regional peace and stability. Thus, during this period, alliance cohesion has been reinforced. The main driver, which has encouraged the two countries to strengthen the alliance cohesion, is change in dominant U.S. threat perception, the rise of China.

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<sup>280</sup> The Defense Security Cooperation Agency, "News: AH-64D APACHE Helicopters."

## VII. CONCLUSION

Since the U.S.-ROK alliance was formed in 1953, it has been regarded as quite a strong alliance with a long lifespan of more than half a century. Although the two countries have maintained the alliance for over sixty years, they sometimes have faced significant conflicts of interest, which weakened the alliance. This thesis has investigated the key factors shaping the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance. In order to find the significant determinants, the thesis research examines how cohesion in the alliance has evolved since the end of the Korean War. Previous research has focused on South Korean variables: South Korea's economic development and the rise of its nationalism. To balance the South Korean side, this thesis examines the U.S. variables. The U.S. has decided its attitudes toward this alliance, following its national interests.

This research chronologically evaluates alliance cohesion from 1970 to 2013 and excludes the early period of the alliance, from 1953 to the 1960s. Following the five major driving events of the U.S., the author divides the whole period into five sub-periods: Détente in the 1970s, the second Cold War in the 1980s, the collapse of the USSR in the 1990s, global terrorism in the first decade of the 2000s, and the rise of China in the early 2010s. The change in alliance cohesion is measured not in absolute terms but in relative terms. Comparing to the strength of alliance cohesion over several periods, this thesis expresses the level of alliance cohesion as strong or weak.

To gauge alliance cohesion objectively, this research selects four indicators. The first indicator, official statements and documents by leaders, is derived from agreements and interests. Reflecting on interests of their own states, high-ranking officials of allied negotiate over extended periods to reach an agreement. Thus, official statements and documents by leaders reflect these bargains. The second indicator is combined exercises and operations that stem from military cooperation. Allies conduct diverse regular combined exercises to improve the effectiveness of military operations. The third indicator, the institutionalization of the alliance, is related to both military cooperation and sharing costs and rewards. Once the institutionalization of the alliance is established, the responsibilities of respective allies for military actions are elaborated. Allies agree

with the level of military burden sharing through alliance institutions. The last indicator is combined military capability, which is closely related to sharing costs and rewards. Allies improve the effectiveness of military actions to upgrade their military armaments in accordance with allied partners' equipment.

The results of the analysis suggest that dominant U.S. threat perception drives the strength of the alliance. When dominant U.S. threat perception changed, the cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance changed well. If the U.S. perceived security threats in the Asia-Pacific region, alliance cohesion became strong. On the other hand, in the case of that the U.S. perceived security threats outside of this region, or emphasized its economic interests more than its security interests, alliance cohesion became weak.

Table 4 shows the U.S. perception of crises from the 1970s to the early 2010s. In the 1970s, détente reduced the U.S.'s threat perception of the USSR, because Soviet threats were greatly diminished. However, the U.S. still perceived the USSR as a threat, because their competition was not fully ended but suspended. In the 1980s, the USSR invaded Afghanistan, which caused the second Cold War. The U.S. again perceived the USSR as a major threat. In 1990–2001, since the Soviet Union collapsed, the U.S. did not have any major threat. However, when the September 11 attacks took place, the U.S. started to perceive global terrorism and some Middle Eastern countries as primary threats. In the first decade of the 2000s, China succeeded in developing its economy and military. The PRC became a global power alongside the U.S. in the early 2010s. The U.S. began to perceive China as its potential major threat.

Table 4. Dominant U.S. threat perception

	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000s	Early 2010s
Major Developments	Détente	Second Cold War	USSR collapse	9/11 attack	Rise of China
Dominant U.S. Threat Perception	Weak USSR	Strong USSR	Economic Focus; “Peace Dividend”	Terrorism	China

Table 5 shows the strength of alliance cohesion in each period. If U.S. threats were related to South Korea in terms of geography, alliance cohesion became strong. On the other hand, if South Korea had no regional proximity with the U.S. threats, the cohesion of the alliance became weak. Alliance cohesion, in the 1970s and 1980s, depended on the U.S.'s relationship with the USSR. During the Cold War, South Korea played a key role in checking the U.S.'s main enemy, the USSR. Given South Korea's geographic proximity to the USSR, South Korea was an ideal advance base for U.S. armed forces to contain the expansion of the Soviet Union. In addition, the two Koreas' conflicts were proxy wars for the two superpowers. Although the origin of the Cold War was in Europe, severe Cold War conflicts took place in the Korean Peninsula, including the Korean War. For the U.S., South Korea's victory was essential to the U.S. position in Cold War competitions. Therefore, in the era of détente, alliance cohesion became relatively weaker, and it became stronger again in the second Cold War. In the 1990s and the first decade of the 2000s, South Korea's location was not relevant to global terrorism. Although the ROK supported the Afghanistan War and Iraq War, it detached few non-combat troops. As a result, alliance cohesion became weaker than in the 1980s.

Table 5. The cohesion of the U.S.-ROK alliance

	<b>1970s</b>	<b>1980s</b>	<b>1990s</b>	<b>2000s</b>	<b>2010s</b>
<b>Official comment</b> (1 <sup>st</sup> indicator)	Weak	Strong	Weak	Weak	Strong
<b>Exercise</b> (2 <sup>nd</sup> indicator)	Strong	Strong	Weak	Weak	Strong
<b>Institutionalization</b> (3 <sup>rd</sup> indicator)	Strong	Strong	Weak	Weak	Strong
<b>Capabilities</b> (4 <sup>th</sup> indicator)	Weak	Strong	Weak	Weak	Strong
<b>Alliance Cohesion</b>	<b>Weak</b>	<b>Strong</b>	<b>Weak</b>	<b>Weak</b>	<b>Strong</b>

However, alliance cohesion became stronger in the early 2010s. With its advanced military and economy, China has pursued a regional hegemony and challenged the U.S.-led international order. With regard to the rise of China, the U.S. has perceived it as a strong potential rival and threat. Considering that South Korea and China are closely located, a close U.S.-ROK alliance would provide military benefits for the U.S. in the case of conflict between the U.S. and China.

In conclusion, since the U.S.-ROK Mutual Defense Treaty was signed in October 1953, the U.S.-ROK alliance was sometimes strong, other times weak. Previous research has focused on Korean variables to find the significant determinant shaping alliance cohesion. However, the results of this research suggest that when South Korea is correlated to dominant U.S. threat perception, alliance cohesion is strong. Consequently, from the 1970s to the early 2010s, changes in dominant U.S. threat perception have been the most important driver of alliance cohesion.

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